

HACK DOWN



US Sanctions North Korea Over Cyberattack

President Barack Obama holds a news conference at the White House in Washington. The United States imposed new sanctions on North Korea on Friday, targeting the North's defense industry and spy service in an attempt to punish Pyongyang for a crippling cyberattack against Sony.

(Jabin Botsford/The New York Times)
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APNEWSBREAK

Iran, 6 powers
move closer to
nuke talks deal

GEORGE JAHN
Associated Press

VIENNA (AP) — Iran and the United States have tentatively agreed on a formula that Washington hopes will reduce Tehran's ability to make nuclear arms by committing it to ship to Russia much of the material needed for such weapons, diplomats say. In another sign of progress, the two diplomats told The Associated Press that negotiators at the December round of nuclear talks drew up for the first time a catalog outlining areas of potential accord and differing approaches to remaining disputes.

The diplomats said differences still dominate ahead of the next round of Iran-six power talks on Jan. 15 in Geneva. But they suggested that even agreement to create a to-do list would have been difficult previously because of wide gaps between the sides. Iran denies it wants nuclear arms, but it is negotiating with the U.S., Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany on cuts to its atomic program in hope of ending crippling sanctions. The talks have been extended twice due to stubborn disagreements. The main conflict is over uranium enrichment, which can create both reactor fuel and the fissile core of nuclear arms. In seeking to reduce Iran's bomb-making ability, the U.S. has proposed that Tehran export much of its stockpile of enriched uranium — something the Islamic Republic has long said it would not do. The diplomats said both sides in the talks are still arguing about how much of an enriched uranium stockpile to leave Iran. It now has enough for several bombs, and Washington wants substantial cuts below that level. But the diplomats said the newly created catalog lists shipping out much of the material as tentatively agreed upon. □

Biden, Venezuela leader discuss improving relations

HANNAH DREIER
JOSH LEDERMAN
Associated Press
CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Last year saw a rapid deterioration of relations between their countries, but on New Year's Day, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden and Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro shook hands and expressed their desire for restored ties.

The brief, impromptu meeting in Brazil came two weeks after President Barack Obama signed legislation to impose sanctions on Venezuelan officials accused of violating human rights. Days before the sanctions were approved, Maduro had called on all Venezuelans to burn their U.S. visas in protest of "imperialist Yankee" policies.

A photograph of Biden and Maduro smiling warmly at each other at the swearing-in of Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff became a meme Friday, with Venezuelans inventing their own thought bubbles.

According to a U.S. administration official traveling with the vice president, Maduro told Biden he wants to improve U.S.-Venezuela ties, but is concerned about the sanctions. The official insisted on not being quoted by name

in discussing what was a private diplomatic conversation.

Biden said that one step Venezuela could take toward improving relations would be to release political prisoners, but Maduro

"What do we ask of the United States? I told Vice President Biden, and have said it 1,000 times in public and in private, we want respectful relations, nothing more," Maduro said.

The two countries have not

Venezuela is suffering as the price of oil plummets. The country derives 95 percent of its export earnings from oil. Earlier this week, Maduro accused the U.S. of waging an "oil war" to destroy the South American



Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro, right, speaks with U.S. Vice President Joe Biden on the sidelines of the swearing-in ceremony of Brazil's reelected President Dilma Rousseff in Brasilia, Brazil.

(AP Photo/Miguel Angulo)

responded that the opposition was destabilizing the country and sanctions would do the same, the official said.

Speaking to reporters afterward, Maduro described the meeting with Biden as "cordial."

exchanged ambassadors since 2010, and public encounters between high-level leaders are rare. Four years ago, the late President Hugo Chavez spoke with then-Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton in Brazil.

country's socialist revolution.

On Friday, the director of the Venezuelan polling firm Datanalisis told local TV station Globovision that Maduro's approval ratings had fallen to a new low of 22 percent. □

US Sanctions North Korea Over Cyberattack

JOSH LEDERMAN
Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — The United States imposed new sanctions on North Korea on Friday, targeting the North's defense industry and spy service in an attempt to punish Pyongyang for a crippling cyberattack against Sony. The sanctions marked the first public act of retribution by the U.S. for North Korea's alleged involvement.

Although it was unclear how painful the blow would be, as North Korea already is under tough U.S. sanctions for its nuclear program, the move signaled that the U.S. was not backing away from its insistence that North Korea is responsible for the cyber-

attack. North Korea has denied involvement, and some cybersecurity experts say it's possible the North wasn't to blame.

"The order is not targeted at the people of North Korea, but rather is aimed at the government of North Korea and its activities that threaten the United States and others," President Barack Obama wrote in a letter to House of Representatives and Senate leaders. Calls to North Korea's mission to the United Nations and to a North Korean diplomat rang unanswered.

Until now, the U.S. had never put sanctions on a foreign nation in direct retaliation for a cyberattack on an American company. But U.S. officials said

the North's behavior had "crossed a threshold" that necessitated a swift and decisive response.

The U.S. decision also put North Korea on notice that payback would not be limited to those who perpetrated the attack. Ten people identified in the sanctions are there because they are associated with the North Korean government, not because of any known involvement with the cyberattack, Obama administration officials said. The sanctions were aimed at increasing the pressure on North Korea by undermining its defense sector and making it nearly impossible for North Korean officials to do business overseas, said the officials, who

briefed reporters on condition of anonymity.

Anyone who works for or helps North Korea's government is fair game to be sanctioned under the executive order that Obama signed Friday while vacationing in Hawaii, officials said. The sanctions also apply to three organizations closely tied to North Korea's government: the country's primary intelligence agency, a state-owned arms dealer that exports missile and weapons technology, and the Korea Tanguin Trading Corp., which supports defense research. All three entities were already subject to sanctions by the U.S., which has an extensive sanctions regime aimed at North Korea's nuclear program. □



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Missing American found dead in Mexican mountains

MARK STEVENSON
AMANDA MYERS
Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Searchers on Friday found the body of an American man who had been missing in the rugged mountains in central Mexico since going on a hike four days ago. Carlos Mandujano, the civil defense coordinator for Morelos state, said a search team found the lifeless body of Hari Simran Singh Khalsa, 25. He was found in one of the narrow gorges or ravines that crisscross the rugged mountains in the colonial town of Tepoztlan, not far from where he was last seen in a picture of himself that he sent by cellphone. "He has been found, but unfortunately, dead," Mandujano said. "We don't know the cause of death yet; that will be de-



Police and specialized rescue personnel search for Hari Simran Singh Khalsa, 25, an American who had been missing in the mountains of central Mexico for four days after going on a hike. State authorities confirmed later on Friday that the life-less body of Hari Simran Singh Khalsa was found at the bottom of a ravine. (AP Photo/Tony Rivera)

termined by the autopsy." Khalsa's family and friends said in a statement later that he apparently died from a fall. "He appears to have fallen while hiking

and sustained a fatal injury to the head," it said. While helicopters and hundreds of police and rescue workers combed the craggy mountains and

cliffs around Tepoztlan this week, it appears Khalsa never went very far. The body "was in the same wooded area, but the thing is that it is very rough terrain," Mandujano said. The search began Tuesday after Khalsa didn't return from going on a hike in Tepoztlan, about an hour south of Mexico City, with only a T-shirt, shorts, and little food and water, said his wife, Ad Purkh Kaur. Kaur said Friday from Tepoztlan that her husband was a yoga instructor born and raised in Brooklyn. The couple have been living in Leesburg, Virginia, but were planning to move back to Brooklyn at the end of the month. Kaur, whose legal name is Emily Smith, said she and her husband arrived in Tepoztlan for a yoga retreat Dec. 26. □

Prosecutors seek death penalty in LA airport attack

BRIAN MELLEY
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Federal prosecutors will seek the death penalty against the man charged in a deadly shooting rampage at Los Angeles International Airport, according to court papers filed Friday. Prosecutors said Paul Ciancia acted intentionally in the killing of an airport screening officer and terrorized passengers and the officer's colleagues. "Ciancia acted with the intent that his crimes would strike fear in the hearts of Transportation Security Administration employees and dissuade them from fulfillment of their duties," Assistant U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald wrote. "By committing his crimes on a weekday morning in a crowded terminal at one of the busiest airports in the world ... Ciancia terrorized numerous airline passengers and airport employees by causing them to fear for their lives and experience extreme emotional distress." Ciancia, 24, has pleaded not guilty to murder and other charges in the killing of Gerardo Hernandez, 39, and the wounding of three other people at the airport on Nov. 1, 2013. He is due in court Monday for a hearing on the status of his case. The shooting exposed security lapses throughout the airport and led to changes in how emergency workers respond to such incidents after Hernandez lay on the floor without medical attention for 33 minutes. The airport was crippled for most of the day, and flights across the country were interrupted. □

Harry Reid suffers broken bones in accident

C. BABINGTON
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid broke a number of ribs and bones in his face when a piece of exercise equipment broke at his Nevada home, causing the lawmaker to fall.

In a statement issued Friday, Reid's office said the 75-year-old senator was hospitalized overnight at University Medical Center in Las Vegas as a precaution. His security detail had initially taken Reid to St. Rose Dominican Hospital near his home in Henderson, Nevada.

The accident occurred when an elastic exercise band broke, striking Reid in the face and causing him to fall, said spokesman Adam Jentleson. Reid struck part of the equipment as he fell, breaking multiple bones near his right eye.

As he hit the floor, he broke several ribs. Tests found no bleeding in the brain or any other internal bleeding, Jentleson said. He is expected to be released on Friday. "Senator Reid will return to Washington this weekend and be in the office Tuesday as the Senate prepares to reconvene. His doctors expect a full recovery," his office said. Jentleson said Reid is likely to have severe facial bruises. Reid, majority leader since 2007, will hand over the top job in the Senate next week to Republican Mitch McConnell of Kentucky after Democrats lost their majority in November's midterm elections. In October 2012, Reid suffered rib and hip contusions in a chain-reaction car crash. □



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Mario Cuomo, giant in NY, liberal politics, dies

MICHAEL HILL
DAVID KLEPPER
Associated Press

ALBANY, New York (AP) — Mario Cuomo, the three-term New York governor who could never bring himself to run for president but inspired a generation of politicians with a loud and liberal voice and a story of humble beginnings as the son of Italian immigrants, has died. He was 82.

Cuomo died Thursday of natural causes due to heart failure at his home, the same day his son Andrew started his second term as governor, according to a statement released by the governor's office. He was surrounded by his family.

Cuomo loomed large in New York politics as governor from 1983 through 1994 and became nationally celebrated for his ability to weave the story of his humble upbringing with ringing calls for social justice.

But he was also known for the presidential races he stayed out of in 1988 and 1992. In 1991, Cuomo left a plane idling on the tarmac at the Albany airport rather than fly to New Hampshire and jump into the battle for the presidential nomination at the last minute. He left the door open for a lesser-known governor, Bill Clinton of Arkansas.

Cuomo's last public appearance came in November, when Andrew was re-elected governor of New York. The frail-looking patriarch and his son raised their arms together in victory at the election-night celebration. He didn't attend Andrew Cuomo's speech Thursday because he was not well, but the current governor spoke of his father.

"He is here and he is here, and his inspiration and his legacy and his experience is what has brought this state to this point," Andrew Cuomo said. "So let's give him a round of applause."

Mario Cuomo's big political break came in 1982 when, as New York's lieutenant governor, he won the Democratic nomination for governor in an upset over New York Mayor

Ed Koch. He went on to beat conservative millionaire Republican Lewis Lehman.

His reputation for elo-

quence was secured at the 1984 Democratic National Convention — the event when the party's presidential candidate is formally nominated — when he delivered his "Tale of Two Cities" keynote address. He told of the lessons he learned as the son of a grocer in New York City.



In this November, 2014 photo, Democratic New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, second from left, celebrates with his father, former New York Gov. Mario Cuomo, and his mother, Matilda, left, at Democratic election headquarters in New York. Mario Cuomo died Thursday, Jan. 1, 2015, the day his son Andrew started his second term as governor, the New York governor's office confirmed. He was 82. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)

"I watched a small man with thick calluses on both his hands work 15 and 16 hours a day," Cuomo told the crowd. "I saw him once literally bleed from the bottoms of his feet — a man who came here uneducated, alone, unable to speak the language — who taught me all I needed to know about faith and hard work by the simple eloquence of his example."

The electrified delegates in San Francisco cheered, "Mario! Mario! Mario!" and some wondered whether they had chosen the wrong presidential candidate in Walter Mondale.

While Mondale's candidacy stumbled, Cuomo took his oratorical skill to Notre Dame University, where as the nation's most famous Roman Catholic supporter of abortion rights, he ar-

gued the church should not expect him to press for outlawing abortions, given that many Catholics themselves were having them.

siveness, fairness, dignity, and opportunity.

In 1993, he turned down an opportunity to be nominated by Clinton for a seat

porter of the good work you are doing for America and the world."

Nineteen months later, with voters tired of him, Cuomo lost his bid for a fourth term to George Pataki, a Republican state lawmaker who had promised to cut taxes and bring back the death penalty.

Mario Matthew Cuomo was born on June 15, 1932, and grew up behind the small grocery store run by his parents in Queens.

He attended St. John's University in New York City, and after graduating with honors in 1953, he spent a summer playing minor league baseball.

Cuomo graduated from St. John's Law School in 1956, tied for top class honors, and soon after went into private practice. He came to the attention of New York City's political community in 1972 when he successfully mediated a housing dispute in Queens for then-Mayor John Lindsay.

In 1974, Cuomo made his first run for public office, losing a Democratic primary for lieutenant governor. □

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American Living: Piano stores closing on low demand

DAVID PITT
Associated Press

BETTENDORF, Iowa (AP) — When Jim Foster opened his piano store 30 years ago, he had 10 competitors selling just pianos. When he closed Foster Family Music in late December, not one was still selling pianos in the Quad-Cities area of Iowa and Illinois.

"We did try hard to find a buyer," Foster said. There were no takers. Stores dedicated to selling pianos like Foster's are dwindling across the country as fewer people take up

offering consumer information on new and used pianos. "People are interested in things that don't take much effort, so the idea of sitting and playing an hour a day to learn piano is not what kids want to do." Youth sports demands also compete with music studies.

"Children these days are being recruited for so many other activities, whether it's soccer, gymnastics, or swimming," said Robin Walenta, CEO of West Music, a music retailer with a chain of stores in Iowa and Illinois.

"On a digital piano they can practice with a harpsichord sound or a trumpet sound. It makes it more fun," she said. "Kids these days need that kind of interaction to be interested." When Dennis Saphir recently closed his piano store in the Chicago suburb of Wilmette, it was the end of a business his family started six generations ago in Vienna. He took it over from his father who brought the business to the U.S. during World War II. Saphir said new piano sales are challenged by fewer parents requiring young-



Jim Foster plays a grand piano in his Foster Family Music Center piano store in Bettendorf, Iowa. The number of stores dedicated to selling pianos is dwindling across the country as fewer people take up the instrument and those who do opt for a used piano or a less expensive electronic keyboard.

(AP Photo/Charlie Neibergall)

the instrument and those who do often opt for a less expensive electronic keyboard or a used piano. Some blame computers and others note the high cost of new pianos, but what's clear is that a long-term decline in sales has accelerated.

The best year for new piano sales in the U.S. was 1909, when more than 364,500 were sold. But after gently falling over the years, piano sales have plunged more recently to between 30,000 and 40,000 annually. Larry Fine, a Boston-based piano technician, consultant and author, said it is an indication of a changing society.

"Computer technology has just changed everything about what kids are interested in," said Fine, who also publishes a website

To succeed now, Walenta said retailers must engage families in music education. Her company offers an early childhood music program that starts with 3-month-old babies. A keyboard exploration program is available for youngsters until they're ready to begin individual lessons at age 7 or 8. Foster Family Music survived because it took a similar approach, offering digital pianos and acoustic pianos with built-in electronics for student lessons and hosting thousands of students in large performance events, Foster said, sitting at a Wi-Fi and fiber optic-equipped Yamaha Disklavier grand piano. Walenta said those types of features on pianos help ensure the instrument continues to be a mainstay for children learning music.

sters to take lessons as part of their upbringing and a glut of instruments already in homes.

"We actually found ourselves competing with our own pianos that came back on the market and, frankly, nothing was wrong with those pianos," he said. "We had serviced them and made sure customers took care of those pianos. There were lots of really excellent pianos on the market for a fraction of what the new piano would cost." The average cost of a new grand piano last year was just over \$16,000.

Well-maintained pianos can make music for 50 to 70 years, said Peter Stumpf, a piano technician for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and Carnegie Mellon University, also in Pittsburgh. □

Fast-food 2015 resolution: Transform junk food image

CANDICE CHOI
AP Food Industry Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Fast-food chains have a New Year's resolution: Drop the junk.

As people express distaste for food they think is overly processed, McDonald's, Taco Bell and other chains are trying to shed their reputation for serving reheated meals that are loaded with chemicals. That includes rethinking the use of artificial preservatives and other ingredients customers find objectionable.

"This demand for fresh and real is on the rise," said Greg Creed, CEO of Yum Brands, which owns Taco Bell, KFC and Pizza Hut.

During the presentation for analysts and investors last month, Creed said the company needs to be more transparent about ingredients and use fewer preservatives.

Recasting fast-food as "fresh" and "real" will be tricky, in large part because it's so universally regarded as cheap and greasy. Another problem is that terms like "fresh," "real" and "healthy" have nebulous meanings, making it hard for companies to pin down how to approach transformation.

One way chains are looking to redefine themselves is by purging recipes of chemicals people might find unappetizing. Already, packaged food and beverage companies have reformulated products to remove such ingredients, even while standing by their safety. PepsiCo, for instance, said it would remove brominated vegetable oil from Gatorade after a petition by a teenager noted it isn't approved for use in some markets overseas.

It's not clear how far fast-food companies will go in reformulating recipes. But the nation's biggest chains are facing growing competition. In the latest quarter, customer visits to traditional fast-food hamburger chains declined 3 percent from a year ago, according to market researcher NPD Group. Fast-casual chains — which are seen as a step up from traditional fast-food — saw visits rise 8 percent.

Part of the appeal of fast-casual chains is that they position themselves as being higher in quality. Chipotle, which touts its use of organic ingredients and meat from animals that were raised without antibiotics, said sales at established locations surged 19.8 percent in the most recent quarter. And Panera vowed this summer to remove artificial colors, flavors and preservatives from its food by 2016.

The ethos of wholesome ingredients is increasingly being embraced across the industry. But not without some challenges. Dan Coudreaut, executive chef at McDonald's, has noted the difficulties in changing recipes. In an interview last year, he said McDonald's is looking at ways to use culinary techniques to replace the functions of certain ingredients.

"If you take (an ingredient) out, what are you giving up?" he said.

Michael Jacobson, executive director of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, said there are likely many cases where artificial preservatives or colors could be replaced with natural alternatives without significant costs. Since their functions vary, he said companies would have to evaluate recipes product by product.

"Sometimes, food additives can be crutches or insurance policies. If a food is frozen, germs aren't going to grow. But preservatives might be added just in case, or they may be used just because their supplier has been using it for so long," he said, adding that such changes are "not a big deal" in terms of the overall health. □

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Low oil prices unlikely to hurt railroads much

JOSH FUNK

AP Business Writer

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The stunning collapse in oil prices over the past several months won't derail the railroads' profit engine even if it does slow the tremendous growth in crude shipments seen in recent years.

Carloads of crude oil spiked well over 4000 percent between 2008 and last year — from 9,500 carloads to 435,560 — as production boomed and the cost for a barrel of oil soared into the triple digits.

Those prices have tumbled severely, to just above \$50 per barrel Friday, and that has rattled some of the investors who have plowed money into companies like Union Pacific, Norfolk Southern and CSX.

All three of those companies have seen their stock prices slip over the past month, along with major U.S. stock markets.

But even with oil prices falling off a cliff, industry analysts and railroad executives point out that crude shipments still make up just a sliver of the overall freight delivered by rail. What's more, because fuel is such a huge cost in the industry, railroads are a direct beneficiary of those falling prices.

Crude oil shipments remain less than 2 percent of all the carloads major U.S. railroads deliver. Sub-\$60 oil might force producers to rein in spending but railroads — which spend hundreds of million of dollars every quarter on fuel — will see their costs fall away.

Those falling energy prices

have also proven to be the equivalent of a massive tax cut for both consumers and businesses, and railroads stand to benefit from that as well.

Fueled by a rebounding employment as well as rising consumer and business confidence, U.S. economic growth reached a sizzling 5 percent annual rate last quarter, the government reported this month. The rebounding economy is likely to drive even greater demand for shipping.

Edward Jones analyst Logan Purk says the importance of crude oil shipments by rail seems to have been inflated by investors.

"It seems like whatever loss in business they see will be offset by the drop in fuel costs," Purk said.

The crude oil business has provided a nice boost for railroads at a time when coal shipments were declining. Profits at the major U.S. railroads have been improving steadily along with the economy, reaching \$13.4 billion in 2013, up from \$11.9 billion in 2012 and \$10.9 billion in 2011.

Officials from Union Pacific Corp., Norfolk Southern Corp., CSX Corp. and Canadian Pacific all tried to reassure investors about crude oil shipments during their latest investment conferences.

"I don't think that we are going to see any knee-jerk reaction. I don't think we are going to see anything stopped in the Bakken," said Canadian Pacific CEO Hunter Harrison said of the massive oil and gas fields that stretch from North Dakota and Montana into Canada. □



Ron Hudgins welds a 2015 Ford F-150 cab at the Dearborn Truck Plant in Dearborn, Mich. U.S. factory activity grew at the slowest pace in six months in December, weakened by declines in orders and production, yet growth was still healthy.

(AP Photo/Paul Sancya)

US Financial Front:

American factory activity growth slows

C. S. RUGABER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S.

factory activity grew at the slowest pace in six months in December, weakened by declines in orders and production. Yet growth was still healthy, a sign manufacturing may help drive the economy's expansion in 2015 as it did last year.

The Institute for Supply Management, a trade group of purchasing managers, said Friday that its manufacturing index fell to 55.5 in December from 58.7 in November. Any reading above 50 signals expansion. November's figure was just below a three-year high reached in October.

December's reading is the lowest since June. But it is also close to the average for all of 2014 and remains at a solid level. Americans are buying more cars and appliances, boosting demand for factory-made goods. Economists also forecast that businesses may spend more on industrial equipment this year, which would also lift

output.

A labor dispute at West Coast seaports, from San Diego to Seattle, has interrupted the shipment of raw materials for many manufacturers, the ISM survey found. That has disrupted production and likely contributed to the lower reading.

Despite the decline, most economists are optimistic about manufacturing's prospects in 2015.

"These were readings that in any ordinary time would be considered excellent," Guy Berger, an economist at RBS Securities wrote in a note to clients.

The survey's measure of employment rose to a four-month high, evidence that factories added jobs last month. That is a good sign for the December jobs report, which will be released next Friday.

U.S. manufacturers are still growing despite struggling economies overseas. A measure of overseas demand for U.S. goods fell last month, the ISM survey found, but remained in

expansion territory. Most economists are confident that the U.S. market is large enough to sustain U.S. factory growth this year.

"The strength of domestic demand will ensure that industry and the wider economy still perform particularly well in 2015," Paul Dales, an economist at Capital Economics, said.

Factory activity in China contracted last month for the first time since May, according to a survey by the bank HSBC Corp. That's the latest sign that the world's second-largest economy is slowing even as its government seeks to put it on a more sustainable path.

A manufacturing index for the nations that share the euro currency rose slightly in December after falling to a 17-month low the previous month.

Falling prices for oil and other commodities have helped many manufacturers by lowering costs, the ISM found.

Other recent data on U.S. manufacturing has been modestly positive. □

After years of cuts;

Rebound in government spending starts to aid economy

DIONNE SEARCEY

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NAPLES, Fla. - For a long stretch, government spending cutbacks at all levels were a substantial drag on economic growth. Now, finally, relief is in sight. For the first time since 2011, local, state and federal governments are providing a small but significant increase to prosperity.

"There's not a lot of positive contribution coming from the government sector, but when you're talking about economic growth, less of a negative is a positive," said Chris Varvares, senior managing director and co-founder of Macroeconomic Advisers, an economic consulting firm.

And so on a recent wind-swept afternoon, John Lynch, armed with a police radio and a giant net, stood along a fishing pier here, on guard for pelicans that might become entangled in fishing lines.

"That's my job, to try and get them to safety," said Lynch, a retired banker



John Lynch, a retired banker who recently took a part-time job on the lookout for pelicans entangled in fishing lines, on a pier in Naples, Fla. Few city governments would have found room in the budget for such jobs during the recession, but such locally-driven spending is resurgent in a small but statistically significant way.

(Melissa Lytle/The New York Times)

with a snowy beard whose uniform was a fisherman's cap and shorts.

Lynch is one of the latest additions to the city's payroll. His is the kind of government job this Gulf Coast town never would have

even contemplated during the recession.

"When everybody else is cutting back, you don't hire people," said Ann Marie S. Ricardi, the finance director for the city of Naples, about 130 miles south of Tampa.

Across the nation, state and local governments, Democratic and Republican alike, are spending on projects that were stalled. Teachers, who were laid off in droves in recent years, are being hired again. Even federal spending in some sectors is on the rise. But no one is making plans for spending sprees, said Donald J. Boyd, senior fellow at the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government. Many officials were spooked by the most serious economic downturn since the 1930s, he said, and these are still tough times for many states and localities.

"It's just in comparison to what they were, they're great," Boyd said.

Since the stimulus programs approved in 2008 and 2009, Republicans in Washington have pushed to cut federal spending; even the \$1.1 trillion budget bill that Congress recently passed to keep the government op-

erating through September abides by spending caps and includes further trims. But there is less of a political drive to slash spending as the federal deficit has declined sharply, said Ron Haskins, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington. The Congressional Budget Office now projects an annual deficit of 3 percent of total economic activity or less through the end of the decade, well under its post-World War II average. And with interest rates at rock bottom, the Treasury's cost of borrowing is barely 1.3 percent of gross national product, an unusually low level that imposes little burden on taxpayers.

"This new revenue, the increase in the economy, the increase in GDP - everything is looking good," Haskins said. "It's releasing pressure to be fiscally restrained."

Federal spending for repair and construction of roads, schools and hospitals is increasing. Medicare and Social Security spending is rising, too, though at a comparatively modest rate, mostly because the previously relentless rise in overall health care spending has markedly slowed.

Looking ahead, some economists are counting on spending on infrastructure and other capital investments to help nudge the economy ahead.

"That's where the real momentum will be, longer term," said Diane Swonk, chief economist at Mesirow Financial in Chicago.

On the state level, signs of budget gaps and midyear budget cuts that were typical during the recession have diminished. Still, state revenue is creeping up, not booming, which translates to only incremental improvement.

More people are working in schools now than a year ago, for example, but there are still nearly 300,000 fewer than before the recession, said Michael Heenan, a spokesman for the American Federation of Teachers.

A recent report from the National Association of State Budget Officers found that general fund expenditures in state budgets enacted for 2015 increased collectively 3.1 percent from the same time frame a year ago. But that is less than the typical increases in the years leading up to the recession.

"There has been some belt-tightening that looks like it's not going to be loosened again," said Tara M. Sinclair, an associate economics professor at George Washington University and economist for the online job site Indeed.

"People may be breathing a little easier. But there's not tons of money sloshing around even for minor expenses."

The recovery has been uneven for governments across the country. Some states are being left behind altogether. Alaska, for one, has been stung by the plummeting cost of oil after projecting that it would be much higher. Other oil-rich states, like Texas, Oklahoma and North Dakota, are bracing for cutbacks.

Continued on page 27



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Israel police say settlers attack US consular staff in West Bank

PETER ENAV
M. DARAGHMEH
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Jewish settlers attacked American consular officials Friday during a visit the officials made to the West Bank as part of an investigation into claims of damage to Palestinian agricultural property, Israeli police and Palestinian witnesses say.

The incident is likely to further chill relations between Israel and the United States, already tense over American criticisms of Israeli settlement construction in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, and Israeli perceptions that President Barack Obama is only lukewarm in his support of Israeli diplomatic and security policies.

Settlers have often spoken against what they call foreign interference in their affairs, but this is the first known physical attack against diplomatic personnel.

Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said that a small number of settlers threw rocks at officials who had come to an area near the Jewish settlement outpost of Adi Ad in two consular vehicles to look into Palestinian claims that settlers uprooted scores of Palestinian olive trees the day before.

He said that after the rock barrage began, the vehicles left the area, adding that police had opened an inquiry following the filing of an official complaint.

Another police official, spokeswoman Luba Samri, said that the American security personnel did not use their weapons during the attack.

Awad Abu Samra, who owns the land in the village of Tormousyya where the damage to the olive trees allegedly took place, said he accompanied the officials with two relatives. He described the officials as security personnel who had arrived in the village in advance of a larger party from the American consulate in Jerusalem, which was scheduled to arrive in the village later that afternoon. "There were six security guards from the consulate riding in two cars," Abu Samra said. "When they got out of the cars they were attacked by young settlers from the outpost who were carrying clubs and axes. They struck the cars with clubs but the security guards did not respond with their weapons."

Abu Samra said that after the attack began the American security guards returned to their vehicles and drove away, explaining that they were under strict instructions not to engage the settlers in any way. He said that the planned visit of the additional officials from the consulate was called off after the incident.

Abu Samra said that last spring he and his family planted some 10,000 olive tree saplings on land the family owns in the village, but that since then, settlers have uprooted most of them. Peter Galus, a spokesman at the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem, confirmed that American consular personnel were pelted by rocks thrown by settlers. He denied reports in some Israeli media outlets that the Americans had deployed and aimed their weapons at the stone throwers, adding that the United States was cooperating with Israel in investigating the incident.

U.S. State Department spokesman Jeff Rathke in Washington said his government was "deeply concerned" by the attack. "The U.S. government follows economic and political issues in the West Bank very closely," Rathke said. "We are working with Israeli authorities in their investigation of the incident, including by offering to provide video footage taken during the incident. We take the safety and security of U.S. personnel very seriously. The Israeli authorities have also communicated to us that they acknowledge the seriousness of the incident and are looking to apprehend and take appropriate action against those responsible." □

AirAsia victims found belted in seats

ROBIN McDOWELL
Associated Press

PANGKALAN BUN, Indonesia (AP) — After nearly a week of searching for the victims of AirAsia Flight 8501, rescue teams battling monsoon rains had their most successful day yet on Friday, more than tripling the number of bodies pulled from the Java Sea, some still strapped to their seats.

from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the U.S. are scouring the ocean floor as they try to pinpoint wreckage and the all-important black boxes.

The data recorder contains crucial information like engine temperature and vertical and horizontal speed; the voice recorder saves conversations between pilots and other sounds coming from inside the cockpit.

pull seven bodies from the choppy waters on Friday, five still fastened in their seats.

Soelistyo, who was only able to confirm two victims in their seats, said a total of 30 bodies have been recovered.

More than a third have been pulled out by a U.S. Navy ship, the USS Sampson.

Generally, aviation experts



Indonesian military personnel carry coffins containing the bodies of victims of AirAsia Flight 8501 upon arrival at Juanda Naval Airbase in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia, Friday, Jan. 2, 2015. After nearly a week of searching for the victims of AirAsia Flight 8501, rescue teams battling monsoon rains had their most successful day yet on Friday, more than tripling the number of bodies pulled from the Java Sea, some still strapped to their seats.

(AP Photo/Dita Alangkara)

Of the 30 corpses recovered so far, 21 were found on Friday, many of them by a U.S. Navy ship, according to officials.

The Airbus A320 carrying 162 passengers and crew went down Sunday, halfway into a flight from Surabaya, Indonesia's second-largest city, to Singapore. Minutes before losing contact, the pilot told air-traffic control he was approaching threatening clouds, but was denied permission to climb to a higher altitude because of heavy air traffic.

It remains unclear what caused the plane to plunge into the sea. The accident was AirAsia's first since it began operations in 2001, quickly becoming one of the region's most popular low-cost carriers.

In addition to looking for victims, Search and Rescue Agency chief Henry Bambang Soelistyo said ships

Toos Sanitoso, an Indonesian air safety investigator, said investigators "are looking at every aspect" as they try to determine why the plane crashed. "From the operational side, the human factor, the technical side, the ATC (air-traffic control) — everything is valuable to us."

Bad weather, which has hindered the search for the past several days, remained a worry. A drizzle and light clouds covered the area Friday morning, but rain, strong winds and high waves up to 4 meters (13 feet) were forecast until Sunday. Strong sea currents have also kept debris moving.

That has severely slowed recovery efforts, as well, as bodies drift farther and farther away.

Col. Yayan Sofiyan, commander of the warship Bung Tomo, told MetroTV his vessel managed to

say the more passengers, luggage and parts of the aircraft that remain intact indicate the plane hit the water in one piece. That would signal problems like a mechanical error or a stall instead of a mid-air break-up due to an explosion or sudden depressurization. Soelistyo pledged to recover the bodies of "our brothers and sisters ... whatever conditions we face." Four crash victims have been identified and returned to their families, including a flight attendant and an 11-year-old boy.

After prayers on Friday, the holiest day of the week for Muslims, more than 200 people gathered at a mosque in Surabaya to remember the victims.

"We pray that the passengers in this AirAsia tragedy will be received by Allah," the imam said, "and that all their sins will be forgiven by Allah." □

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ARUBA WINE TIME

Families of Shanghai victims grieve, seek answers

DIDI TANG
Associated Press

SHANGHAI (AP) — Like hundreds of thousands of other revelers, 24-year-old Pan Haiqin decided to ring in the new year on Shang-

steps to a viewing platform to see the dazzling lights. Nearly 20 hours later, her parents and friends identified her trampled body in a city morgue, one of 36 people killed in one of the

bers mourned the lost, who were mostly young women. On social media and TV airwaves, many Chinese were asking how such a tragedy could have happened in the heart of the

an who worked so hard in this city."

Shanghai is known for a better-oiled municipal government than most other Chinese cities, with its leaders supposedly savvy in managing traffic and crowds. But the tragedy has exposed gaping vulnerabilities in the city's preparedness and emergency response system.

Authorities were still investigating the cause of the stampede, but street vendors, residents, taxi drivers and other witnesses say the city failed to prepare for the massive turnout Wednesday night. Officials may not have expected such large numbers in the riverfront area called the Bund after they canceled a much-hyped midnight light show and hosted a toned-down version at another location.

Zhao said the crowd descending from the platform crashed into him and his girlfriend and others at the bottom of the 17 steps as they were trying to inch up. "We were holding hands then, but no way could we resist the force coming down," he said. "We were separated, and people fell down backward

with their faces up, piling on each other. When we were able to pull them out, many were already unconscious."

Grieving family members and friends say they were kept in the dark about rescue efforts and post-mortem arrangements. They said they had yet to meet or talk with senior city officials. On Friday, many were forced inside a district government compound, with reporters kept out.

"We are basically placed under house arrest," Cai Jinjin, whose cousin Qi Xiaoyan was killed in the stampede, said before an Associated Press reporter was asked by Shanghai police to leave the compound. During light shows in previous years, city and military police tightly controlled foot and car traffic on the riverfront. But on Wednesday night, the hundreds of thousands who showed up were allowed mostly to move freely.

"On major holidays, the viewing platform is always restricted — which is known to us all, but this time it was completely open," said a riverfront resident who declined to give his name for fear of reprisal. □



A man cries as he prays for victims of a stampede in Shanghai, China, Friday, Jan. 2, 2015. Authorities were still investigating the cause of the stampede late Wednesday night, but street vendors, residents, taxi drivers and other witnesses say the city failed to prepare for the massive turnout.
(AP Photo/Ng Han Guan)

hai's famed riverfront as the skyscrapers flashed and sparkled. But as the crowd grew and then turned into an out-of-control crush of bodies, the real estate professional never made it up

deadliest accidents in this showcase Chinese city. Some 49 others were injured.

With authorities identifying 35 dead victims by name, hundreds of family mem-

country's high-profile financial hub.

"I blame myself for it. I did not protect her," said Pan's boyfriend, Zhao Weiwei, his eyes welling with tears. "She was a cheerful wom-

Saudi royal court says King Abdullah, 90, has pneumonia

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP)

— Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah is being treated for pneumonia and his condition has stabilized with the help of a breathing tube, according to a Royal Court statement issued Friday.

The statement, which was released by Saudi state media, said the monarch, 90, had been transferred Thursday to a military hospital after experiencing shortness of breath and

back pain. The Saudi Royal Court said medical tests showed the king had a respiratory infection.

After spending a little more than week at his royal encampment in Rawdat Khuraim, a green oasis about 62 miles (100 kilometers) north of Riyadh, the king returned to the capital on Wednesday and was admitted initially to a National Guard hospital for medical tests. The health of the monarch is of ex-

treme importance in the kingdom, where Abdullah holds absolute powers to enact laws and appoint ministers. His condition is also watched internationally largely due to the country's role as one of the world's largest oil exporters, as well as regionally where the kingdom has used its influence to counter the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood group and Shiite Iran.

Abdullah officially assumed the throne in 2005, but has

largely been seen as the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia since the mid-1990s. He reportedly underwent back surgeries in 2010 in New York City, and in October 2011 and November 2012 in Saudi Arabia.

The aging monarch met President Barack Obama in March and appeared before the press wearing an oxygen tube. Official photographs of the king have also shown him in a wheelchair.

His successor is 79-year-old half-brother Crown Prince Salman. Abdullah has outlived two other half-brothers who held the crown prince post. In an effort to assuage concerns about continuity and stability in the kingdom, 69 year-old Prince Muqrin was appointed deputy crown prince and second-in-line to the throne last year. He is the youngest surviving son of Saudi Arabia's founder, King Abdulaziz Al Saud. □



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Italy rescues migrants on freighter abandoned by crew

E. POVOLEDO

A. COWELL

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VERBANIA, Italy - For the second time in three days, Italian authorities found themselves racing on Friday to rescue hundreds of migrants from an aging freighter that traffickers had pointed toward Italy and then abandoned, leaving the ship to plow through wintry seas at top speed with no one at the helm, on a collision course with the coastline.

Rescuers were able to board the ship only after it stopped, perhaps because it ran out of fuel, and by afternoon they were towing it toward shore. But the episode led officials to suggest that traffickers have hit on a new tactic to extract ever greater profits from human misery while eluding apprehension.

The latest drama came as the Ezadeen, a 50-year-old livestock carrier sailing under the flag of Sierra Leone, headed for the coast of southeastern Italy, in the eastern Mediterranean, with an estimated 450 people on board. There were reports that after six days at sea, the migrants, including pregnant women and dozens of children, had exhausted the supplies of food, water and milk on board, and that the ship might also have run out of fuel.

"When we called the ship to ask about its status, a migrant woman responded, saying, 'We are alone, and we have no one to help us,'" said Cmdr. Filippo Marini, an Italian coast guard spokesman. He said the ship, which departed from a Turkish port, had been left on autopilot. Paramedics reported that the migrants, most of



A merchant ship that ran out of fuel bound for Italy, abandoned by its crew but with some 450 migrants — mostly Syrian — still on board, in the Mediterranean Sea on Jan. 2, 2015. (Icelandic Coast Guard via The New York Times)

whom were believed to be Syrian, were in good health, he added.

Until recently, migrants coming to Italy by sea arrived primarily in smaller boats that sailed north from North Africa. The shift to steel-hulled cargo ships approaching from the

east denotes a new strategy, an Italian naval official said, and traffickers are "secure in the knowledge that no one is going to allow a boat to crash on Italian or Greek shores."

In record numbers, fugitives from war zones, failed states or repressive regimes

routinely pay up to \$6,000 each for a chance to fulfill dreams of security and new lives in Europe, braving not only rough seas and capricious journeys but also a groundswell of hostility toward immigrants across the Continent.

"The money involved is

huge," said William Spindler, a spokesman for the U.N. refugee agency.

The first rescue vessel to come to the aid of the stricken Ezadeen was an Icelandic patrol boat sailing as part of a program coordinated by Frontex, the European border agency. But the seas were too rough for rescuers to cross from one vessel to the other, and an Italian helicopter was called in to airlift coast guard officials onto the boat.

After several hours of effort, and after the 240-foot Ezadeen had run out of fuel, the Icelandic coast guard ship took it under tow, Marini said.

Some analysts said the change in the traffickers' tactics had occurred since Italy phased out an ambitious and costly search-and-rescue operation called Mare Nostrum, which located and rescued dozens of smaller boats used by migrants. □

Firefighters find black box on still-burning ferry

P. SANTALUCIA
Associated Press

BRINDISI, Italy (AP) — Wearing gas masks against the smoke, Italian firefighters and investigators boarded the charred Norman Atlantic ferry on Friday and retrieved a data recorder they hope will help them discover what caused a deadly blaze.

But with some parts of the ferry still burning, they emerged hours later to admit they must put off for at least a day the search for any more bodies in the maritime disaster that has already killed 11 people. The team will attempt to go back onboard on Saturday.

Greece says 19 people are still unaccounted for

after a fire broke out Sunday as the ferry traveled from Greece to Italy, and disputes Italian claims of a higher number of missing. Italy says 477 passengers and crew were rescued from the burning ferry, most by helicopters operating in gale-force winds.

Both nations fear the ferry car deck where the fire started could contain more bodies, possibly those of unregistered migrants trying to slip into Italy.

The badly damaged ferry was towed for 17 hours across the choppy Adriatic Sea before docking Friday at the southern Italian port of Brindisi. A second tug was tied in with the ship to stabilize the wreck. One side of the ferry was black-

ened by smoke and an acrid smell was noticeable dockside.

Investigators began work Friday by taking photos and video of the ferry's smoky interior. After several hours, prosecutor Ettore Cardinali stepped back ashore, took off his gas mask and told reporters the team couldn't get into the crucial car deck.

"For the time being, it is unfortunately impossible to get inside ... for safety reasons, we cannot verify firsthand what's inside," he said. But he did say investigators had retrieved the black box recorder and promised to extract data from it. Firefighters say they will not start searching for bodies until the blaze is fully

extinguished — and could not give an estimate of when that would be.

"There are cars and trucks and other things that are still slowly burning, which ... could still go ahead for a long time," Brindisi Fire Commander Michele Angiuli told reporters.

Four more people, meanwhile, were put under investigation Friday by the prosecutor's office in Bari. In addition to the ship's captain and the head of the company that built the ferry — both Italians — two other crew members and two representatives of the Greek ferry line Anek, which rented the Norman Atlantic, are under investigation, the Italian news agency ANSA reported. □

ECB chief gives stimulus hint; Euro sinks

PAN PYLAS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The euro slid to a 4-1/2 year low against the dollar on Friday after the head of the European Central Bank hinted at plans to fight alarmingly low inflation across Europe. In an interview with Germany's financial daily Handelsblatt, Mario Draghi, the ECB's president, said that the bank is more at risk of failing to keep prices stable than it was just six months ago.

program similar to those undertaken by other central banks, such as the U.S. Federal Reserve and the Bank of England. Many experts think the ECB could make the announcement at its next monetary policy meeting on January 22. Although the ECB has cut interest rates to record lows and backed the purchase of some private-sector bonds, it has refrained from a full-scale bond-buying program — so-called quantitative easing, or QE.

economy if consumers put off purchases in the hope of future bargains, and companies struggle to remain profitable. Deflation can prove difficult to reverse, as evidenced by Japan's economic stagnation over the past two decades. Proponents of quantitative easing say the policy can help shore up a recovery and support prices by reducing the borrowing costs for businesses, households and governments. The associated fall in the curren-



Jens Weidmann, President of German Central Bank is seen in Berlin. Weidmann, a member of the ECB governing council, told the Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung newspaper that German growth forecasts for next year don't reflect the extent of the oil price fall — so growth could be better than expected. (AP Photo/Markus Schreiber)

"We have to avoid too-high inflation and we have to avoid too-low inflation as well," Draghi said. "We are making technical preparations to alter the size, pace and composition of our measures in early 2015, should it become necessary to further address risks of a too prolonged period of low inflation." Traders sold euros and bought U.S. dollars in response, driving the euro down 0.7 percent to \$1.201 as of 3:37 p.m. Eastern time Friday. The euro hasn't traded below \$1.20 since June 2010. Back then, Europe's financial markets were reeling as Greece, Ireland and other countries struggled under their debts. For many in the markets, Draghi's comments were a clear hint that the bank stands ready to launch a full-blown bond-buying

The euro has been in retreat for months on the back of expectations that the ECB will back a further stimulus as traders anticipate more of the currency in circulation. While anemic levels of economic growth across the eurozone are a major source of concern for policymakers at the ECB, it is too-low inflation that's prompting the speculation of further action. Inflation in what is now the 19-country eurozone — Lithuania adopted the euro on Thursday — stands at 0.3 percent, far below the ECB's annual target of price increases just below 2 percent. The worry is that weak inflation turns into a widespread drop in prices. Although that might sound good in principle, deflation can choke the life out of an

cy could also help boost growth by making exports cheaper and push prices up by making imports more expensive. But officials in Germany, Europe's largest economy, say such a program would amount to throwing money at profligate states. Germans are concerned that the country's taxpayers will end up being burdened with the debts of Greece, Italy and Portugal. Success is not guaranteed, as evidenced by Japan's return to recession even though the country's central bank is enacting its own bond purchase program. "The comments suggest the ECB will soon adopt sovereign debt QE which may come as soon as their next meeting," said Lee Hardman, a currency analyst at Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ. □

Moscow-led trading bloc begins in troubled times

JIM HEINTZ
Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — The Eurasian Economic Union, a trade bloc of former Soviet states, expanded to four nations Friday when Armenia formally joined, a day after the union between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan began. The Russian-dominated bloc has been politically controversial and its early days are being overshadowed by the sharp deterioration of Russia's economy in recent months.

A look at the bloc, its implications and its prospects: WHY A UNION?

The union aims to create a single integrated market for the free movement of goods and services over a total population of more than 180 million people, something like the 28-nation European Union. Unlike the EU, the bloc does not have a single currency, but is expected to try to establish one at some point. The former Soviet republic of Kyrgyzstan is expected to join by mid-year and Tajikistan is also a prospective member.

Moscow pushed hard for Ukraine to join, hoping its 45 million people and large-scale heavy industries would be a key piece of the trading bloc. But many Ukrainians detested the idea, seeing it as Russian President Vladimir Putin's attempt to reconstitute the Soviet Union and exert more influence on their country. The issue was key to inciting protests that eventually drove Ukraine's Russia-friendly President Viktor Yanukovich from office in February. Ukraine has since signed an agreement to deepen ties with the EU.

Although the EEU is nominally only a trade bloc, its economic heft could be a "soft power" political lever for Moscow.

TOUGH TIMES

The bloc's formation culminates nearly a decade's drive by Russia, whose fortunes have changed sharply over the past year. Once an economy luxuriating in a cornucopia of oil and gas revenues, the collapse of world oil prices in 2014 has left Russia suddenly vulnerable. Added to that is the effect of Western sanctions against Russia for its annexation of Crimea and its support for separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine. Most painfully, the sanctions deny Russian businesses access to Western credit markets. The ruble also lost about 45 percent of its value against the dollar in 2014.

The ruble's decline in value is likely to have serious consequences for the other countries in the bloc. "Russia's economic troubles are already creating problems for currencies, inflation levels, remittances and trade patterns in the new economic bloc," the U.S.-based Stratfor analysis group wrote.

The problems are especially visible in Belarus, which has largely retained a Soviet-style command economy. As the Russian ruble tanked, Belarus feared a run on its own banks and imposed a 30 percent fee on foreign currency transactions.

POLITICAL TENSION

Both Kazakhstan and Belarus appear worried about Russia's dominance of the trade bloc for political reasons. Putin and other Russian officials have justified the annexation of Crimea and its support for Ukraine's separatist rebels partly on the grounds that these areas were once part of the Russian empire. But both Kazakhstan and Belarus did not exist as independent states before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has resisted Russian attempts to win control of his country's economic assets, warning Russia "if you try to hurt us, we won't tolerate that. We aren't puppies to be taken on a leash."



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PALM BEACH - Recently Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a large group of devoted visitors as Distinguished Visitors and Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The symbolic honorary titles are presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for between 10-to-19 and 20-or-more consecutive years. Ms. Darline S. de Cuba representing Aruba

Tourism Authority, together with Mr. John de Cuba honored the special island guests at the Holiday Inn with well-deserved plaques and certificates. The honorees include Family Bodenstein of New York, Family Gottlieb of Indiana, and Family Fishman, also of Indiana. They all love returning to Aruba because the island is like a second home to them. They have all been visiting

the island for the past years with much devotion and warm feelings. They all enjoy the warm inviting sun, the gracious treatment from everyone, the absolute feeling of safety everywhere/anytime, the unending selection of restaurants, and the abundance of shopping from flea markets to elegance! Congratulations to the Happy Families and Happy New Year!.

Pure Beach Bar Lounge and Restaurant New Menu Revealed



PALM BEACH - Located at Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort, Pure Beach is a casual all day dining café and bar with European beach club aesthetics. Encircled by the waters of the freeform resort pool, and bordered by the spectacular beachfront, the café is outfitted with comfortable couches for lounging along with low tables and chairs, a friendly dining room set up and plenty of stools at the bar, all decorated in a chic beige and white color scheme.

This week, the curtain went up on a refreshed menu featuring incredibly delicious food, artistically plated and served in generous portions.

The menu was inspired by the culinary team of chefs at Divi Resorts, with famed Corporate Executive Chef Matt Boland, at the helm. Chef Matt reports researching classic Caribbean sauces and garnishes, as well as using past menus as resources, bringing back top favorites in novel presentations, using the freshest fish, meat, vegetables and herbs available on the island, and conducting extensive tastings, with his team of chefs and with guests, to identify just the right type

of beach-vacation dishes, befitting this charming all day lounge, bar and restaurant, in the island's most relaxed beachfront setting.

You will find Caribbean Fish Tenders on the menu, made of crispy and flaky flash-fried grouper, served with a mango lime dipping sauce. The Shrimp & Seafood Ceviche is brimming with shrimp, scallops and calamari infused with lime and fresh herbs, served with pickled onions and peppers and a coconut cocktail sauce; the Greek Beef Tenderloin Kabob, flaunts tenderloin tips, onions and

peppers, topped with feta cheese and Kalamata olives; and the Tuna Tataki, delivers sesame crusted seared ahi tuna, served over a wakame seaweed salad with a teriyaki glaze and wasabi aioli.

The menu goes on to introduce the Mojo Chicken Quesadilla, in a spinach tortilla filled with melted cheese and grilled chicken, served with pico de gallo, guacamole and sour cream, and the star of the lineup, the Kobe Sliders, featuring three mini wagyu kobe beef burgers, topped with Gouda cheese and red wine caramelized onions. The Pure Beach Sampler is a great idea, for friends to share a sampling of the restaurant's most popular appetizers, includ-



ing chicken wings, kabob and fried fish fillet tenders. As creative sides, diners will love the Pure Beach Signature Fries, French fries topped with salt, pepper, truffle oil, Parmesan cheese and garlic, mixing French fries with sweet potato fries.

Canadian will appreciate the popular O' Canada! Poutine on the menu, along with other options such as Tex-Mex Baked Potato, BBQ Baked Potato, and Veggie Lover's Baked Potato, with all the trimming.

An especially designed pizza menu ideal for sharing features Pure Beach's Pure Pizza, deliciously thin and crispy crusts including Pizza Pepperoni, Margarita, Mojo Verde, and Italiano, with a hearty sausage & mushroom sauce.

You may combine your meal in the restaurant's fun ambiance with a chilled drink, your pick from a great selection of wines, or a hand crafted cocktail.

Best of all, because Pure Beach delivers an open-air lounge, a laidback beachfront bar, and a casual restaurant, go ahead and relax, pick your spot, soak up the warm Aruban sun while enjoying a drink or two, and a snack between frequent dips in the ocean. □



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EAGLE BEACH - Recently, Darline S. de Cuba honored loyal guests at the Casa del Mar as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20-or-more consecutive years. The honorees are Jim and Donella De Courcay, hon-



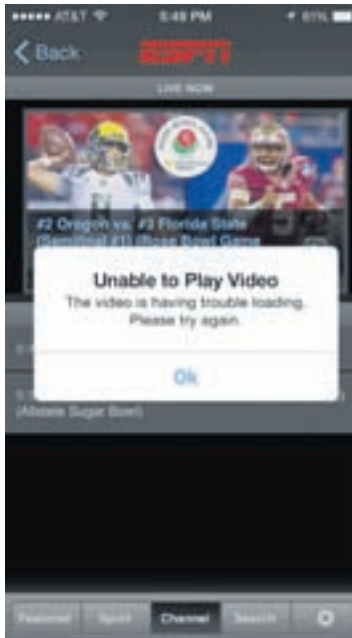
ored for visiting Aruba for 26 years consecutively. The De Courcay family sure did enjoy their vacation in Aruba together with the family Daughter Shari Romano & Granddaughter Danielle Romano, Mother and friends. □ The certificate was presented to them by Ms. Darline S. de Cuba representing Aruba Tourism Authority in the presence of Mrs. Mo-



nique Sylvania, Manager of the Members Relations Department.

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blue ocean, our friendly people and diverse restaurants and casinos. □



In this screenshot, the WatchESPN application is demonstrated on an iPhone on Thursday, Jan. 1, 2015.
Associated Press

Server problems shut down ESPN's Rose Bowl stream

NEW YORK (AP) — What ESPN calls “a technical issue relating to servers” is the fancy term for what knocked out part of Thursday’s streaming coverage of the Rose Bowl. The problem left would-be viewers on tablets and computers seeing only an error message during the first hour or so of the WatchESPN stream of the season’s first College Football Playoff game. Those gremlins persisted for a portion of the audience “a while longer,” said ESPN spokesman Paul Melvin. WatchESPN feeds video services on tablets, phones, computers and other streaming devices like console game systems. On Friday, the network was reviewing its system. ESPN “will be working to prevent a recurrence in the future,” Melvin said. □



WATT AGE

Watt, Gronk are unanimous All-Pro picks

Houston Texans defensive end J.J. Watt (99) celebrates on the sideline after sacking Jacksonville Jaguars quarterback Blake Bortles for a safety during the second half of an NFL football game Sunday, Dec. 28, 2014, in Houston.
Associated Press
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LeBron to miss 2 weeks with knee, back injuries

TOM WITHERS
AP Sports Writer
CLEVELAND (AP) — Cleveland Cavaliers superstar LeBron James is expected to miss at least the next two weeks with injuries to his left knee and back. The timing of the injuries is another blow to the Cava-

Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James looks up during an NBA basketball game between the Milwaukee Bucks and the Cleveland Cavaliers Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2014, in Cleveland. The Bucks defeated the Cavaliers 96-80.

Associated Press

liers, who have been jarred by a rash of medical issues and failed to live up to the enormous expectations triggered by James re-signing as a free agent with Cleveland last summer. The team said on Thursday that James has knee and back strains. He'll be treated with "anti-inflammatories, rehabilitation, training room treatments and rest," and the Cavs projected he will miss two weeks. If he's out for just that span, James will be back for a Jan. 15 game in Los Angeles against the Lakers. The Cavaliers begin a five-game West Coast trip on Jan. 9.

James, who turned 30 on Dec. 30, missed his second straight game on Wednesday. Before his team lost 96-80 to Milwaukee, the four-time league MVP said all tests on his knee had come back negative.

He acknowledged his knee has been hurting all year, which helped explain why James hasn't shown the same explosiveness driving to the basket, and his willingness to defer to teammates.

He also acknowledged that 11 NBA seasons have taken a toll on his body.

"I've got 41,000 minutes on me, including the playoffs," he joked. "You drive that car in the winter time." James has never missed more than five straight games in his professional career. If the two-week timetable holds up, his absence could reach 10 games or more. That could be a major problem for the Cavaliers, who've had issues with chemistry and re-

cently lost starting Brazilian center Anderson Varejao for the season with a torn Achilles. On top of that, forward Kevin Love missed Wednesday's game with back spasms and reserve Shawn Marion has sat out the past two games with a sprained ankle.

If that wasn't enough, first-year coach David Blatt has come under intense scrutiny for the team's sluggish start.

At 18-14, the Cavs have lost three straight and four of five heading into Friday's game in Charlotte.

James briefly left Cleveland's game at Miami on Christmas Day — his first in the regular season against his former team — after jumping into the stands to chase an errant pass, and was grabbing at his left knee in obvious discomfort not long afterward.

That was not the cause of the injury, just a recurrence of an ongoing issue, James said before the Milwaukee game.

"It was before that, but it reaggravated it," James said. "It's been hurting pretty much all year. I've been playing with it and it goes away, it comes back."

Including playoffs, James has logged 41,082 NBA minutes — ninth-most among all active players.

James lost weight before this season, but insisted it wasn't to compensate for a loss of speed, to help him jump higher or try to prolong his career. However, he seemed to understand that he needed to make changes to remain the game's best all-around player. □

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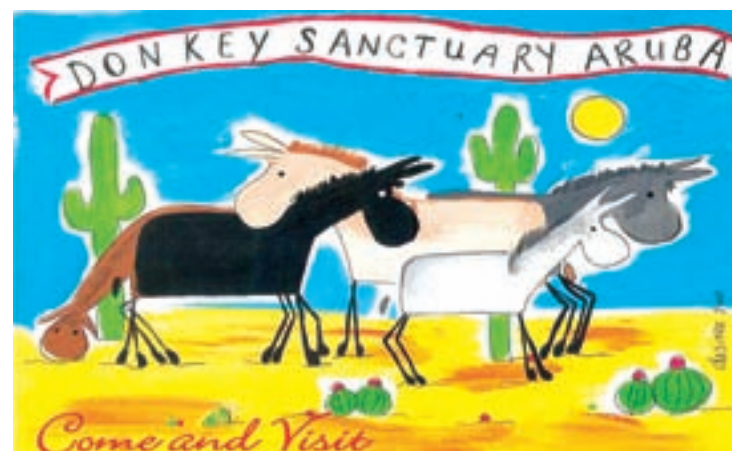
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Rose leads Bulls over Nuggets 106-101

The Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Derrick Rose scored 13 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter, and the Chicago Bulls beat the Denver Nuggets 106-101 on Thursday night. Jimmy Butler scored 26 for Chicago, and Pau Gasol added 17 points, nine rebounds and a career-high nine blocks.

The late surge by Rose lifted the Bulls to their 11th win in 13 games. The 2011 NBA MVP missed his first eight shots, including all seven in a scoreless first half, but the point guard dominated down the stretch, coming up with one big basket af-

ter another.

Wilson Chandler led Denver with 22 points. Ty Lawson scored 20, while Aron Afflalo had 19 points. Kenneth Faried added 18 points and 19 rebounds, but the Nuggets fell to 4-12 on the road.

KINGS 110, TIMBERWOLVES 107

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Rudy Gay had 21 points, and the Kings handed the Timberwolves their 10th straight loss.

DeMarcus Cousins had 19 points and seven rebounds after being ejected one night earlier, and the Kings shot 54 percent while each

of their starters scored in double figures. Darren Collison scored 21 points and Derrick Williams had 17 points, including a big 3-pointer down the stretch. Andrew Wiggins had 27 points and nine rebounds, but the Timberwolves couldn't take advantage when Cousins and Gay both fouled out in the fourth quarter. Troy Daniels' 3-point attempt at the buzzer was partially blocked.

Gorgui Dieng added 15 points and 10 rebounds for Minnesota, and Shabazz Muhammad also scored 15. □

Chicago Bulls' Jimmy Butler (21) dunks during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Denver Nuggets in Chicago, Thursday, Jan. 1, 2015. Chicago won 106-101.

Associated Press



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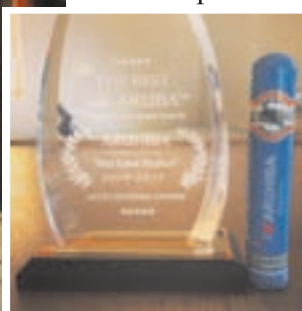
ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi, a true native Aruban started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced hand rolled cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi always had a interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crops. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba, he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The whole process took him 10 years to perfect. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the moulding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. Their handmade cigar box is specially designed with their "Aruhiba" logo. Petrocchi considers

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Watt, Gronkowski unanimous AP NFL All-Pros

BARRY WILNER

AP Pro Football Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — J.J. Watt found a unique way to make the 2014 Associated Press NFL All-Pro team announced Friday.

The Houston Texans' Watt was listed on all 50 ballots by a nationwide panel of media members who regularly cover the league, with 45 of the votes for defensive end and the other five for defensive tackle. So he actually was a first-team end and a second-team tackle in gaining his third straight selection.

"Everybody always says you try and make it so the other team can't game plan you because they don't know where you're coming from," Watt said. "I mean, half the time I have no clue where I'm coming from, so it makes it pretty tough for the other people, I think, and that's the goal."

No such confusion for New England's Rob Gronkowski as the other unanimous pick. He grabbed all the votes for tight end.

"He's, I think, when you say a kid playing the game, that's him," Patriots safety Devin McCourty said. "He don't care about anything, stats, if we're up or down, he's playing one way. He's playing hard and you can



New England Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski (87) scores a touchdown as New York Jets' Calvin Pryor (25) tackles him during the first half of an NFL football game Sunday, Dec. 21, 2014, in East Rutherford, N.J.

Associated Press

tell he's just having fun with his friends on the field."

Dallas led all teams with four All-Pros, including guard Zack Martin, the only rookie on the squad. League rushing leader DeMarco Murray, tackle Tyron Smith and wide receiver Dez Bryant also made it.

"I wasn't really coming in this year expecting to do this, but it's been a fun season," said Martin, a first-round draftee from Notre Dame

who has been a major cog in the Cowboys' superb running attack.

Making their first All-Pro teams were all four Cowboys, plus Seattle inside linebacker Bobby Wagner; Buffalo DE Mario Williams and DT Marcell Dareus; Kansas City outside LB Justin Houston; Pittsburgh WR Antonio Brown and RB Le'Veon Bell; Baltimore guard Marshal Yanda; Green Bay fullback John Kuhn; Cincinnati kick returner Adam Jones; and

Indianapolis punter Pat McAfee.

Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers made it for the second time; he also was the All-Pro QB in 2011.

Brown was next closest to sweeping the panel, earning 49 votes. Murray drew 48 and Houston 47.

"When you step into a stadium he's a known issue, but still he performs," Steelers coach Mike Tomlin said of Brown. "We could talk about some of the same

things about guys like J.J. Watt. We knew what he was capable of when we were getting ready to play him, but it still doesn't stop the storm from coming."

Cleveland tackle Joe Thomas earned his fifth All-Pro spot, the most of anyone on the current team. Patriots cornerback Darrelle Revis got his fourth All-Pro berth.

Seattle and Pittsburgh each had three All-Pros. There were 16 AFC players and 11 from the NFC.

The Seahawks were all defensive players: Wagner, cornerback Richard Sherman and safety Earl Thomas.

"I'm on such a great defense that sometimes there are guys that get overlooked and unfortunately I was one of them," said Wagner, who missed five games with injuries in his third pro season.

"But I think all the things that has happened this year as far as the awards and the recognition and stuff like that, it means so much more to me this year because everything that I went through this year."

Repeaters from 2013 were Watt, Thomas, Detroit DT Ndamukong Suh, Carolina inside linebacker Luke Kuechly, Sherman and Thomas. □

Bengals need to get to Luck to end playoff drought

The Associated Press

While preparing to host the Cincinnati Bengals in the NFL first-round playoffs on Sunday, the Indianapolis Colts have avoided watching film of their regular-season meeting in mid-October.

That was a 27-0 demolition by the Colts.

Since then, things have changed.

The Colts could see receiver A.J. Green for the first time if he is cleared of concussion. Linebackers Emmanuel Lamur and Rey Maualuga missed that October game with injuries, too. The Bengals have also reaped a stronger ground game out of Jeremy Hill.



Cincinnati Bengals running back Giovani Bernard (25) leaps for the end zone past Pittsburgh Steelers free safety Mike Mitchell (23) and scores a touchdown during the first quarter of an NFL football game, Sunday, Dec. 28, 2014 in Pittsburgh.

Associated Press

The rookie running back wasn't on the Colts' radar in October, and ran for 15 yards against them. Now,

he leads all NFL rookies with 1,124 yards rushing and nine touchdowns on the ground, a threat the Colts

are preparing for.

"Our one biggest thing on our game plan is you must stop Hill," Colts defensive lineman Ricky Jean Francois said. "We must stop that run game and make them beat us throwing."

Indianapolis' running game, on the other hand, ranges from stagnant to nonexistent, which will allow the Bengals to gear up for the air game. The Colts' defense is inconsistent, the offensive line has been decimated by injuries, and they're not a great home team.

But they start 3 1/2-point favorites because they have Andrew Luck, who led the league with 40 touchdown

passes. Luck torched the Bengals for 344 yards and two touchdowns in the October romp.

The Bengals have Andy Dalton, who has led his team to the playoffs for a fourth straight season, but he's known more for the way he falls apart in the biggest games.

Cincinnati hasn't won a playoff game since the 1990 season, and to defy history, it will need to pressure Luck. The Bengals don't have much of a pass rush, ranking 20th against the pass, and managing a league-low 20 sacks. Indy is solid at protecting Luck.

Continued on Page 21

Steelers-Ravens ready for Round 3 in NFL playoffs

The Associated Press

The nastiest rivalry in the NFL resumes on Saturday in Pittsburgh where the Steelers and Baltimore Ravens meet in the first round of the playoffs.

The Ravens have experienced nothing but agony at Heinz Field during the postseason, losing all three playoff games there in 2002, 2009 and 2011.

And now, here we go again.

"We'd like to win one, one of these days," Ravens coach John Harbaugh said.

Pittsburgh and Baltimore have already played twice this season, with each AFC North team winning by 20 points at home. Including the playoffs, the Steelers lead the series 24-17.

"We love this rivalry, we love being a part of it," Harbaugh said, "and I believe they feel the same way."

Memories of Hines Ward jawing at the Ravens, Terrell Suggs yelling at the Steelers, and Jacoby Jones skip-

ping past Steelers coach Mike Tomlin on the sideline are some of the highlights of the Steelers-Ravens rivalry. Mostly, the rivalry is about hard hits, helmet-jarring tackles, and bloody noses.

Asked what stands out most, Harbaugh replied, "The physicality, first of all, and the intensity. Every play, whether it's a playoff game or not, is played at that level."

The Steelers could be without running back Le'Veon Bell, who hyperextended his right knee last weekend. That isn't necessarily a big edge for the Ravens, as good as Bell has been. Pittsburgh won the last meeting even with Bell being limited to 20 yards on 10 carries, and Baltimore struggles in pass coverage.

If Bell is unable to go, it puts more pressure on the offensive line to give quarterback Ben Roethlisberger time to throw to league-leading receiver Antonio



Dallas Cowboys running back DeMarco Murray (29) carries the ball during the first half of an NFL football game against the Washington Redskins in Landover, Md., Sunday, Dec. 28, 2014. Murray set the franchise single-season rushing record for the Cowboys on the play.

Associated Press

Brown and rookie Martavis Bryant.

Baltimore's defense finished with 49 sacks, second most in the league, and its front seven will be bolstered by the return of nose tackle Haloti Ngata, who sat out the last four games after violating the NFL's policy on performance-enhancing drugs.

Also on Saturday, the Carolina Panthers, who won the NFC South with a losing record, will welcome the reel-

ing Arizona Cardinals.

Only Seattle in 2010 won a division with a losing record before the Panthers did. Carolina can take encouragement from the fact Seattle then won a wild-card playoff.

The Panthers have won four in a row to become the first repeat division champion in the South.

They averaged 199.3 yards rushing per game in December and found bal-

anced offense with quarterback Cam Newton and two 1,000-yard receivers: Tight end Greg Olsen and rookie wide receiver Kelvin Benjamin.

Arizona was the talk of the NFL until injuries struck pretty much everywhere. The Cardinals went from a 9-1 record to a wild card, and have third-stringer Ryan Lindley at quarterback. Their defense, also undermanned, will need a huge game.

Bengals

Continued from page 20

"Suppressing Andrew Luck is going to be kind of hard," safety Reggie Nelson said. "He always starts off kind of slow and the scary thing is, he can always get his team going. The key for us as a secondary is not giving up deep balls, and we've given up a couple of those the last couple of games." History doesn't matter when the Detroit Lions visit the Dallas Cowboys in the second Sunday game. Neither team inspires much confidence in the postseason. The Lions rarely make it, and then go out right away. Dallas has been a shell of the franchise that Tom Landry and then Jimmy Johnson coached two decades ago.

Even with Lions right tackle

Ndamukong Suh cleared to play after his one-game suspension for stomping on Green Bay quarterback Aaron Rodgers was changed to a \$70,000 fine, Detroit's defense will get burned by the Cowboys' Tony Romo, DeMarco Murray, Jason Witten and Dez Bryant.

The Cowboys just finished a 4-0 December in which they won every game by double digits. Last weekend, during their biggest win over Washington in 11 years, Murray broke Emmitt Smith's franchise single-season rushing mark from 1995, and Bryant's 16th touchdown broke Terrell Owens' team record of 15 set in 2007. For the month, Romo completed 75 percent with 12 touchdowns and one interception, and his 114.4 season passer rating is sixth best in NFL his-



Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger looks skyward after completing a touchdown pass to wide receiver Antonio Brown during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game against the Cincinnati Bengals, Sunday, Dec. 28, 2014, in Pittsburgh. The Steelers won 27-17 to win the AFC North.

Associated Press

tory.

"They can adapt their scheme to multiple differ-

ent fronts," Lions coach Jim Caldwell said of the Cowboys offensive line.

"There hasn't been really any scheme that's slowed them down much."

NHL Capsules

Capitals top Blackhawks 3-2 in Winter Classic

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Winter Classic began with perhaps a bit too much sun. By the end, seat cushions were falling from the sky.

The latest NHL outdoor game had a cliffhanger ending Thursday, with Troy Brouwer scoring with 12.9 seconds remaining to give the Washington Capitals a 3-2 win over the Chicago Blackhawks in the league's annual showcase.

Many of the 42,832 fans at Nationals Park celebrated by flinging their commemorative red cushions high into the air, an exclamation point to an event that helped validate the nation's capital as an established hockey town.

The seventh Winter Clas-



Washington Capitals right wing Eric Fehr (16) scores a goal past Chicago Blackhawks goalie Corey Crawford (50) in the first period of the Winter Classic outdoor NHL hockey game at Nationals Park, Thursday, Jan. 1, 2015, in Washington.

Associated Press

U.S. loses 3-2 to Russia in world junior quarters

MONTREAL (AP) — The United States was eliminated from hockey's world junior championship Friday with a 3-2 loss to Russia in the quarterfinals.

Defensemen Anthony DeAngelo and Zach Werenski scored for the Americans, who finished out of the medals for the second straight year after winning two years ago in Ufa, Russia.

"It's tough to swallow," said DeAngelo, a Tampa Bay first-round pick who plays for Sarnia in the Ontario Hockey League. "We thought we were just as good as their team in this tournament. I still do, but we're not going to have a chance to show it. It is what it is now."

Russia advanced to a semifinal in Toronto against the winner of the Sweden-Finland quarterfinal.

Ivan Barbashev and Sergei Tolchinski had power-play goals and Alexander Sherov also scored for Russia. Igor Shestryokin provided strong goaltending,



United States' Miles Wood is stopped by Russia's goaltender Igor Shestryokin during the third period of a quarterfinal round game at the world junior ice hockey championship, Friday, Jan. 2, 2015 in Montreal.

Associated Press

with the Americans outshooting Russia 41-25.

"Before the game everyone said we are underdogs," Russian coach Valeri Bragin said. "I agree with that because the American team has a lot of skilled players and is well organized, but we capitalized on our chances in the beginning of the game, and we had solid goaltending."

Our team showed real team spirit."

The game, a weekday matinee played before a sparse crowd at Bell Centre, was marked by 14 minor penalties. The U.S. was drawn into five of them in the opening period and fell behind 2-0.

"If you have to kill off that many penalties in a row you spend a lot of energy," U.S. coach Mark Osiecki said.

sic featured a replica of the Capitol in center field, through which the players entered the ballpark. They stood on a sheet of blue ice meant to represent the Reflecting Pool during the national anthem, then faced off under a gorgeous blue sky — too gorgeous, if truth be told.

The sun's glare on the white ice of the main rink made it difficult to see the puck, and Capitals defenseman Karl Alzner made good on his plan to play the game wearing sunglasses.

The teams switched sides at the 10-minute mark of the first period to even things out as the shadows from the stands began to cover the rink. It seemed totally unfair when Patrick Sharp launched a sun-to-shade slap shot that beat goalie Braden Holtby on a power play for Chicago's first goal.

The NHL considered delaying the start, concerned that the sunny skies would compromise ice conditions and player safety, but the go-ahead was given after the pregame skate.

Eric Fehr and Alex Ovechkin also scored for the Capitals.

Brandon Saad had the other goal for Chicago.

KINGS 3, CANUCKS 2 VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Justin Williams and Jarret Stoll scored 53 seconds apart late in the third period to rally Los Angeles past Vancouver.

Williams tied the game on a power-play goal with 2:07 left before Stoll scored the winner with 1:14 to go. Dwight King had the other goal for Los Angeles, which got 14 saves from Jonathan Quick.

Radim Vrbata had a goal and an assist, and Alexandre Burrows also scored for Vancouver. Ryan Miller stopped 37 shots.



In with the new: Snappy apps for 2015

By **BARBARA ORTUTAY**
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) -- Uber, Facebook, Instagram - sure, they've been all the rage, but as 2014 winds down we're all ready for something fresh. From ride-hailing to photo sharing, here are a few up-and-coming apps and startups to watch in 2015. Which will be the breakout hit of the new year?

TELL A STORY

Instagram, which is owned by Facebook Inc., now has 300 million users - more than Twitter. Scrolling through its snapshot feeds gives users a quick glimpse into the lives of friends and strangers. (At least the parts that include empty beaches, cappuccinos with perfect foam hearts and smiling babies in clean clothes.) Its simplicity is part of its appeal. But what if you want to tell a longer story?

Enter Storehouse, a mobile app that promises to let you share "your stories, as they happen." Instead of sharing one-off photos, Storehouse lets users combine photos, videos and words to share anything from a



In this Jan. 4, 2013 file photo, Lyft passenger Christina Shatzen gets into a car driven by Nancy Tcheou, in San Francisco. Lyft has managed to avoid much of the controversy that's been dogging Uber, and the image it projects appears to be a kinder, gentler one.

Associated Press

detailed recipe, to travel memories or a first-person documentary on the Yakuza. Storehouse was founded by Mark Kawano, who previously worked at Apple as a User Experience Evangelist, helping developers design iOS and Mac apps. "Writers always had a great platform for blogging," Kawano said recently. "But that hasn't happened with photographers yet." Other photo apps, he said, are

basically just status updates in a visual form. Storehouse hopes to change that.

HAIL A RIDE

If you haven't heard of Uber, you must never leave your house or watch the news. Many people also are familiar with Uber's smaller rival Lyft, which burnishes its kinder, gentler image by slapping huge pink mustaches on the front of its cars. But more companies are queuing up to

squire you around town.

In 10 cities in the U.S., including San Francisco, Seattle, Chicago and Los Angeles, you can order up a Sidecar. The service differentiates itself by letting passengers input their destinations when they book rides and sort drivers based on price, shortest ETA and favorites. In Los Angeles, there's also Opoli, which lets drivers bid for your ride so you can decide which one to go with. You can pick your vehicle too, and make a reservation. Unlike many other app-based car services, Opoli also allows its drivers to work for competitors. Opoli doesn't take a commission on a fare; its drivers pay a subscription fee to use the service.

COOK A MEAL

Food-ordering apps such as Seamless have made it easy to order in. And if you want to venture outside, OpenTable and smaller competitors such as Reserve help you quickly book a table with their smartphone apps. But if you'd rather give your loved ones the personal touch, new DIY services will provide carefully measured ingredients and detailed recipes for even the clumsiest of cooks.

Sites such as HelloFresh, Plated and Blue Apron deliver weekly boxes of raw ingredients - even including spices and, at least in the case of HelloFresh, water. The only things you're

assumed to have in your pantry are salt, pepper, oil and possibly butter. An upcoming "family plan" box for Blue Apron, for example, features chicken under a "brick" with rosemary, roast potatoes and broccolini; New England-style shrimp rolls with warm potato and kale salad; fresh pappardelle Bolognese with romaine, celery and apple salad and two-cheese pizza with iceberg chopped salad. The meals are quick to prepare, so if you're tired of takeout and live in their delivery location, these services could spice up your diet. Or maybe help with that "eat-healthy" New Year's resolution?

CHIT CHAT

You've heard of WhatsApp, the nearly-free messaging app that Facebook paid \$22 billion for this year. And there's Facebook's own messaging tool, which was the year's most-downloaded app (likely because you had to download it if you wanted to message people using Facebook). That's all so 2014. Why message people you know when you could instead check out Ethan, a messaging app that lets you do just one thing - message a guy named Ethan. He "may message you time to time" but cautions that he "can't respond when he's asleep." Nothing if not honest, Ethan doesn't want you to message him in an emergency, and will advise you not to fall in love with him. But want to plan a dinner-and-movie night? No problem. "Should I get Italian or Chinese for dinner?" (Answer: Italian) and "Gonna watch a movie on Netflix, what should I go for?" (Answer: "The Room.")

PUT THAT PHONE DOWN

If your New Year's resolution is to stop being so rude with your phone and talk to your friends face-to-face every once in a while, there's an app for you, too. It's called Moment, and it tracks how much you use your iPhone and iPad each day (sorry, no Android version yet).

Samsung TVs to use company's own Tizen software

YOUKYUNG LEE

AP Technology Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)

— Samsung Electronics Co. said its Internet-connected televisions will this year use its internally developed operating system known as Tizen, in the company's latest attempt to boost its software power.

The company said Friday that the first Tizen-equipped smart TVs will be unveiled next week at a trade show in Las Vegas. It will be Samsung's biggest use yet of Tizen in its mainstay products.

The launch of smartphones using Tizen was postponed several times last year in a setback to Samsung's efforts to reduce its reliance on Android for its mobile devices. Instead, it used Tizen in the Gear series

of smartwatches and a camera, but the market reception for these early Tizen products was lukewarm. Analysts expect Samsung to use Tizen for low-cost mobile devices sold in emerging markets such as India.

The company said the adoption of the Tizen OS in televisions will allow a better collaboration with developers and other partners to provide more content to view on televisions.

Samsung said Tizen-based televisions will synchronize with Samsung mobile devices to search and share content between phones and televisions. It will also serve as a center for Internet-connected homes, known as smart home, where residents can remotely control electronics

and lighting.

Despite being the world's largest supplier of televisions and mobile phones, Samsung's software capabilities have been a weak spot.

Many of Samsung's software services and apps have been short-lived even though they were often delivered to consumers pre-installed in Samsung mobile phones. Samsung's mobile messenger app, ChatOn, will be the latest Samsung service to die. ChatOn is scheduled to be shut down next month. In July, Samsung said it had postponed the Russian launch of a Tizen-powered phone. The company said Friday it is still developing smartphones using the operating system but declined to disclose its launch plan.

US construction spending slips 0.3% in November

JOSH BOAK

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — A sharp slowdown in government-built schools and infrastructure caused U.S. construction spending to fall slightly in November. The Commerce Department said Friday that construction spending slipped 0.3 percent in November, after having climbed an up-

wardly revised 1.2 percent in October and 0.6 percent in September.

Much of the decline came from a 1.7 percent retreat in government expenditures. Publicly-built school spending fell 2.5 percent, while the transportation, health care and public safety sectors also fell. Private construction spending rose a modest 0.3 percent

in November. Home-building climbed 1 percent in November, offsetting the declines in the office, commercial and health care-related construction.

Total construction spending has improved a mere 2.4 percent from a year ago to \$974.9 billion. Construction activity has lagged broader economic growth for much of 2014, hampered by lim-

ited gains in homebuilding. Few potential buyers can afford new homes, a reflection of meager wage growth, tight credit standards and builders focused on pricier housing developments that are beyond the financial reach of most home-seekers. Residential construction spending declined 0.5 percent over the past 12 months to \$352.7

billion, although solid gains in the past two months suggest that homebuilding activity likely helped economic growth in the final quarter of 2014. Analysts at the bank Barclays projects that annualized growth in the October-December quarter will be 2.8 percent, a solid increase but down from an annualized gain of 5 percent in the third quarter. □

US stocks end mixed on first trading day of New Year

STEVE ROTHWELL

AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Stocks got off to a sluggish start on the first day of trading in the New Year, ending the day mixed as a report showed that manufacturing growth slowed in December.

U.S. factory activity grew at the slowest pace in six months last month, weakened by declines in orders and production, according to the Institute for Supply Management. While the sector is still in good health, growth was slower than economists had forecast.

The stock market climbed to record levels at the end of 2014 and investors may now be reassessing the outlook for the market at the start of the year, said Brad McMillan, chief investment officer for Commonwealth Financial, an independent broker-dealer firm. While growth prospects in the U.S. look decent, in Europe and Asia they are less encouraging.

Investors are "stepping back and saying, 'now we're in the New Year, let's take a fresh look,'" said

McMillan. "There's certainly some degree of, I wouldn't say pessimism, but readjustment, going on."

The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 0.70 points, or less than 0.1 percent, to

faded in the final days of the year. The S&P 500 climbed 11.4 percent, after rising 29.6 percent in 2013. To justify those gains, company earnings will have to keep growing.



Traders work on the floor at the New York Stock Exchange. Stocks got off to a sluggish start on the first day of trading in the New Year, ending the day mixed as a report showed that manufacturing growth slowed in December.

(AP Photo/Seth Wenig)

2,058.20. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 9.92 points, or less than 0.1 percent, to 17,832.99. The Nasdaq composite dropped 9.24 points, or 0.2 percent, to 4,726.81.

Stocks had another good year in 2014, but the rally

"We don't think the U.S. equity market is going to do anywhere near as well this year" as it has in recent years, said Dan Morris, global investment strategist at TIAA-CREF, an investment manager. "There's a lot more that could go

wrong than could go right in the U.S."

Morris says stock investors should expect returns in the single digits this year, and should also brace themselves for higher levels of volatility as the Federal Reserve moves toward its first rate increase since 2006.

On Friday, stocks started out with solid gains, then fell back after the ISM published its manufacturing report. After drifting lower for much of the afternoon, the market recovered slightly and ended the day little changed.

U.S. crude fell after moving between losses and small gains. The price dropped 58 cents to \$52.69 a barrel in New York. Brent crude, the international standard, declined 91 cents to \$56.42.

Declining in oil prices are a boon to consumers, who are paying less for gas, but they hurts energy companies by lowering their revenues. The energy industry accounts for about 10 percent of earnings of companies in the S&P 500 index. The fall in prices will also mean that oil companies

will rein in spending on plants and equipment, said Anastasia Amoroso, global market strategist for J.P. Morgan Funds.

"The benefit of lower oil prices is incremental to the damage that they inflict on other parts of the economy," Amoroso said.

In currency trading, the euro retreated against the dollar. The decline came after European Central Bank President Mario Draghi indicated that the bank could support a government bond-buying program to combat alarmingly low inflation in the eurozone. The currency fell to \$1.2003, its lowest level against the dollar in 4-1/2 years.

Investors have a number of concerns about Europe as 2015 begins. Growth is anemic in the region and an election in Greece on Jan. 25 could re-ignite the country's debt crisis if an anti-austerity party wins.

In government bond trading, prices rose. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note fell to 2.11 percent from 2.17 percent on Wednesday. □

Hyundai, Kia brace for weakest growth in a decade

YOUKYUNG LEE

AP Business Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Hyundai Motor Co. and its affiliate Kia Motors Corp. are forecasting their weakest growth in yearly car sales in more than a decade as competition intensifies and the global economy slows. Hyundai Motor Group, the world's fifth largest

automaker, said Friday the two carmakers aim to sell a combined 8.2 million vehicles this year.

That would be an increase of just 2.5 percent from last year's sales about of about 8 million vehicles. Sales grew 4 percent in each of the past two years.

Chairman Chung Mong-koo told employees in

his New Year's speech that the group should cut costs, increase productivity and share components to fend off competition from Japanese rivals boosted by a cheap yen. Sales of Hyundai and Kia cars grew at double digit rates until 2011 as the group weathered the 2008 financial crisis by introducing new designs

and marketing. The Korean group was also aided by a weak local currency. In 2010, car sales at Hyundai and Kia jumped 24 percent combined as exports surged.

But that momentum has slowed since 2012 as the won strengthened against the yen and as foreign auto brands gained popularity in South Korea,

hurting Hyundai and Kia's domestic sales. A series of recalls and quality issues also challenged Hyundai at home and overseas.

Chung said the auto group will put priority on improving its brand and boosting its research and development. The group will increase investment in eco-friendly technologies and its brand this year. □

When Readers Do Get It



NICHOLAS KRISTOF
© 2014 New York Times

Poetry is a window into the soul. And one lesson to me from the reaction to my "When Whites Just Don't Get It" series is that we need soul-searching about race in America. So I invited readers this month to submit poems about race. Thanks to everyone for sending in more than 300 poems, and I'm happy to turn this column over to you readers and your verse.

Carolyn Tillo, a public relations specialist, wrote poignantly about the high school she attended in Jacksonville, Florida, and the roots of racial division: I learned about race in my high school cafeteria.

Whites sat on one side,
Blacks on the other.
It was a house Divided.
We were smart kids enrolled in advanced courses,
But we didn't know how to eat together. ...

Can we talk of progress when we still sit at separate tables?
Two readers used poems to make precisely opposite points about violent protests in Ferguson, Missouri, and elsewhere. Angel Butts, a white woman married to a black man and the mother of "two beautiful brown babies," said she hadn't written a poem in 20 years. But she lives on Staten Island in New York, three blocks from where Eric Garner died shortly after he was put in a chokehold by a white police officer, and "this one poured out":

As Ferguson burns,
I hear the outrage of a people with lives rendered valueless once and for all.
A people with hearts that can bleed onto the streets without recourse.

And so, as Ferguson burns, I hear the voice inside me chant, "Burn on."

Let the fires burn until every city,
every town is on its knees.
Until there is no choice but for all of us to burn alone or rise again together.

In contrast, Mark Steensland, a white author, filmmaker and professor in California, wrote in distress at the turmoil.

He grew up inspired that his father had marched for civil rights

in Selma, Alabama, but he is upset by what he sees today:
But you there
Breaking windows
Just remember:

You have no right to right
If you do wrong yourself
And revenge is not justice
Just wrong turned inside out.

This call for poetry was inspired in part because Susan Donnelly, a Massachusetts poet I've admired, sent me a powerful piece she wrote after Ferguson. It touched me:

What stays with me more than flames,
broken glass, crowds swarming the streets
after the non-indictment; the edge-of-screen war correspondent clutching his mic,
reporting low-voiced to us outsiders,
are the tears running down the young woman's cheek,
that she keeps swiping, as she tries

to stay calm for the interview.
It's like -
and she starts again:

They don't realize we're human.
Not the fire but the broken heart.

Several people sent in poems recording frustrations with how race clouds perceptions. Ayokunle Falomo, who moved to the United States from Nigeria seven years ago, wrote:

But please, hear me loud,
though muffled
My voice may well be, when I say that

I, too, can no longer breathe.
Kristine Hadeed of Baltimore, whose mother is black and father is Arab-American, wrote of her mixed heritage.

She describes herself as a math equation (this poem, like others, is longer; I'm publishing excerpts here, but the poems in their entirety are on my blog at nytimes.com/ontheground):

I am a mixed number,
a percentage of a people,
I am a fraction of a stereotype.
My blood is a canal running between two cities,
and I am the bridge that few from either side dare to cross.

Uzra Khan was born in India and came to the United States as a teenager.

Now a graduate student at Harvard, she says she often puzzles people about her racial or ethnic origins:

What do I look like?
Turkish? Italian? Persian?
Why does it matter...?
While I pass as all,
I ache to belong to one.
Or none, unquestioned.

I'll give the last word to a 10-year-old girl from London, Natalia Immordino, whose poem began:

The shade of a person is just the cover to their story,
And there is no reason not to open their book. □



The First Pop Quiz of 2015



GAIL COLLINS
© 2015 New York Times

Happy New Year! Wishing you many good things in 2015. Or at least, a better year than the one that just ended. Which seems pretty likely, all things considered. But before we shove off into the future, let's see what you remember about 2014.

Since there are a lot of quizzes at this time of year, we are going to specialize here in politics and air travel.

1. The National Rifle Association is famous for its defense of the right to carry guns. An NRA commentator demanded that the right to bear arms be extended to:

- A) Blind people.
- B) Preschoolers.
- C) Bad shots.
- D) Career criminals.

2. This year, a professor at the University of North Carolina published a study of Mitt Romney's 2012 presidential campaign in which he determined that by the end of the race it took 22 staff members to:

- A) Keep the candidate's hair in check.
- B) Create the candidate's position on health care.
- C) Approve campaign tweets.
- D) Keep the family dog tied to the car roof.

3. The \$1.1 trillion spending pack-

age Congress passed at the end of the year was called the:

- A) Cronibus.
- B) Enola Gay.
- C) Big Bargain.
- D) Return to Normalcy.

4. Identify the person who said, "We've had enough Bushes."

- A) Barbara Bush on Jeb's presidential prospects.
- B) George H.W. Bush on attendance at recent family reunions.
- C) White House groundskeeper on the annual Foliage Census.
- D) Texas Land Commissioner-elect George P. Bush on his commitment to family planning.

5. One of the year's multitudinous crises involving air passengers behaving badly came when a woman brought a pig to her seat on a plane. She claimed she needed it:

- A) To keep the man in front of her from reclining into her lap.
- B) As a conversation starter.
- C) For emotional support.
- D) As a food tester.

6. The Knee Defender is:

- A) The position John Boehner played in college football.
- B) A gadget you can stick onto the back of an airplane seat to keep your neighbor from reclining.
- C) A line of high-fashion support stockings.
- D) A member of the British royal household who accompanied Will and Kate to that basketball game in Brooklyn last month.

7. After investigations into Benghazi by the House Intelligence Committee, the House Armed Services Committee, the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the House Oversight Committee, Speaker John Boehner prepared for the new year by creating:

- A) A drinking game in which everybody has to quaff red wine whenever they hear the word "Libya."

B) A \$3.3 million special committee on Benghazi.

C) A bipartisan commission on duplication of congressional investigations.

D) A new tradition in which he tells reporters, "If ands and buts were candy and nuts, then every day would be Christmas."

8. The first thing Mitch McConnell says he'll do when he becomes Senate majority leader this month is:

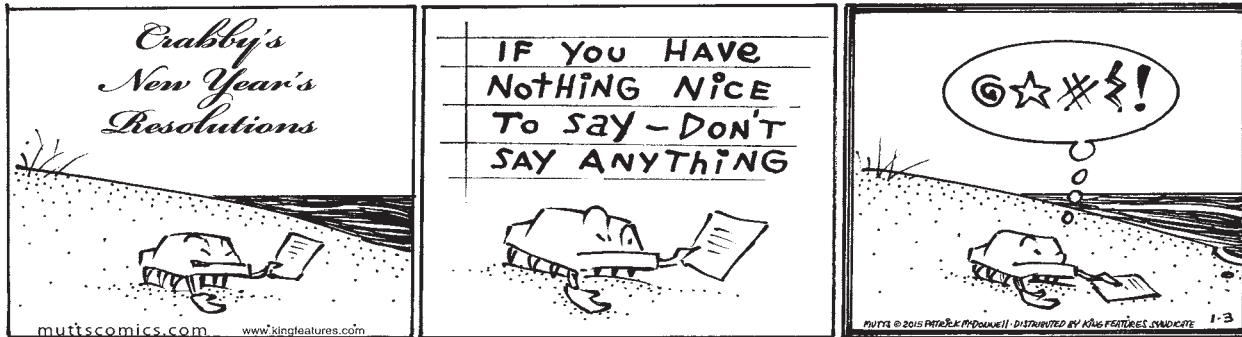
- A) Create a new Senate investigation into Benghazi.
- B) Finance a new Monument to Coal on the National Mall.
- C) Tie up Ted Cruz and stick him in the basement.
- D) Pass a bill authorizing a humongous oil pipeline.

9. Moved by their congressman's impassioned declarations of his innocence, voters in Staten Island re-elected Rep. Michael Grimm despite his multiple indictments for tax evasion. To welcome in the new year, the triumphant Grimm:

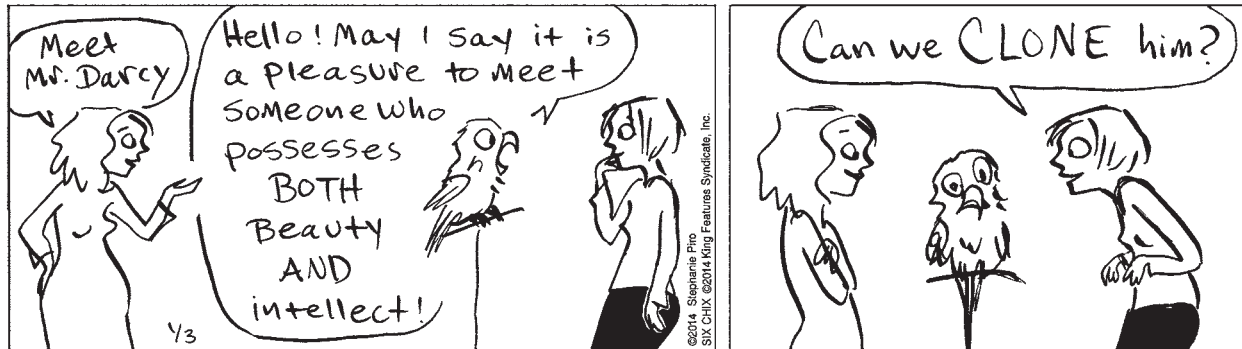
- A) Apologized to a young TV reporter for threatening to throw him over the Capitol balcony.
- B) Announced he was introducing a bill that would help small-business men like himself avoid being badgered by the Internal Revenue Service for no good reason.
- C) Pleaded guilty to a felony tax charge.
- D) Revealed he'd be starring in a reality show in which he is stranded on an island with the former congressman from Staten Island who was revealed to be hiding a second family in Virginia.

ANSWERS: 1-A (In a video titled "Firearms and the Blind," an NRA commentator said, "It's been proven that people that lack vision have an increased awareness of their hearing and spatial surroundings."); **2-C; 3-A; 4-A; 5-C; 6-B; 7-B; 8-D; 9-C.** □

Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

			4		9			
	4						5	
		3	2		8	7		
2		5				9		1
				3				
8		6				3		4
		2	9		7	4		
	6						2	
			8		6			

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

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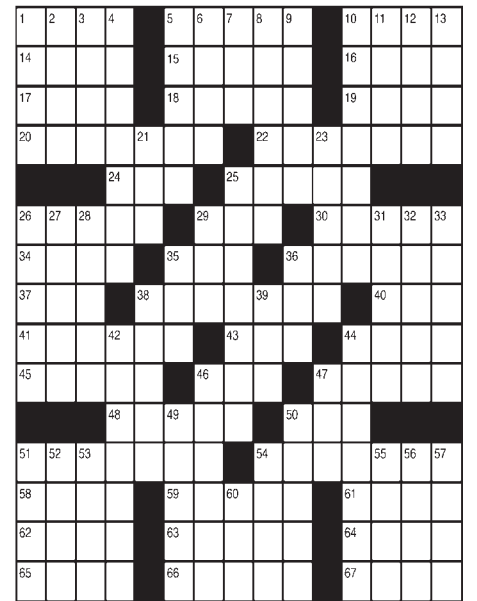
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

2	9	7	4	6	3	5	8	1
5	8	6	1	9	2	7	3	4
3	1	4	8	7	5	2	6	9
9	4	3	7	2	6	1	5	8
1	7	2	3	5	8	4	9	6
6	5	8	9	4	1	3	7	2
7	3	9	2	8	4	6	1	5
8	2	5	6	1	7	9	4	3
4	6	1	5	3	9	8	2	7

ACROSS

- Hotels
- At ___ for words; tongue-tied
- Ignore rudely & deliberately
- Money, slangily
- ___ bat an eyelid; showed no surprise
- Stockings
- Past due
- New Delhi's nation
- Kiln
- Frozen dessert
- Poster
- Debtor's note
- Tiny bit
- Cuddly-looking marsupial
- Bashful
- Bills & Braves
- "Ticket to ___"; Beatles song
- Zodiac sign
- Baggage porter
- Obsolete
- Aged
- Cow's remark
- Had to have
- Money left for the waiter
- Rescuer
- Deadly reptile
- Tibia's location
- Spaghetti sauce herb
- Stacked
- Tavern
- Spun around
- Alike
- "Shape ___ ship out!"
- Once more
- ___ advantage of; exploit
- Mixer speed
- Capture
- Very eager
- Split ___; hair problem
- Goofed
- Sunbathes



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

1/3/15

Friday's Puzzle Solved

THIN	RECAP	SHOE
RENO	ERODE	PAIN
EAST	COLORBLIND	
ELI	NEST	LARKS
	GLADE	HES
ADHERE	GUSHER	
GETTY	GRABS	LOT
OAFS	FLOGS	DAME
GNU	SEATS	MISER
	SLOPED	HUSTON
	PAD	SUSHI
ASTIR	MINE	CAD
BLANKETING	PITA	
LAKE	LARGE	ITOR
EYED	SNEER	TYPE

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1/3/15

DOWN

- Woes
- Ark builder

- Memo
- Germfree
- "Bye, Pierre!"
- Fuzzy residue
- Peculiar
- Rudely curt
- No longer fresh
- Appalled
- ___ Scotia
- Drug addict
- South ___
- Indiana
- Feathery scarf
- Played a role
- Yelled
- Swedish dollar
- Lubricated
- Found a sum
- ___ aside; reserve
- High points
- Native New Zealander
- Thread holder
- Youth
- Congressman's title: abbr.
- Earn; deserve
- Big ___; semi

- Leaves
- Natural environment
- Account book
- Ne'er-do-well
- Rent long-term
- Yearned
- Cartoonist
- Goldberg
- ___ up; disclose one's feelings
- Amphibian with leathery skin
- S, M, L or XL
- Etha's output
- Related
- Ruby & scarlet
- Broadcast

Government spending

Continued from page 8

By contrast, California has wound up with more revenue than expected, a turnaround from a few years ago, prompting talk of more financing for education, including community colleges.

Yet even in California, the celebrations of the end of hard times are restrained.

"I caution that we've been through a difficult downturn here," said Michael Coleman, fiscal policy adviser to the League of California Cities. "Reserves have been spent down, so we're skating on thin ice."

Florida's governor, Rick Scott, signed a \$77 billion budget this summer that offers tax cuts while providing more money for education, museums, sewer projects and a bicycle trail. In a statement after signing the budget, Scott referred to the economic wringer the state went through after the housing bubble burst and Florida's unemployment rate rose to more than 11 percent. The governor argued that the new budget "will keep the great Florida turnaround story going."

For the city of Naples, it was clear the squeeze was over: For the first time since the recession, it had a budget surplus.

That was one reason the city, after a long lobbying campaign from a conservation organization, fi-

nally agreed to dedicate \$10,000 for two part-time workers to help trapped pelicans - birds whose constant presence hovering over the shore makes them practically town mascots. At least three times in the last year, concerned residents called firefighters to rescue some of the birds who were dangling from the bushy branches of Australian pines, tangled in fishing line discarded at the pier.

The Naples Pier outreach assistant job was a minor item in the \$32.9 million budget but an important symbol that times were flush again.

During the hard years, Naples, with a population of 20,000 year-round residents and an extra 15,000 during the balmy winter season, used its stash of reserves to balance its budget.

A wealthy town with a tax base of beachside mansions and tourist dollars, Naples was cushioned from the body blows the recession dealt nearby communities like Cape Coral and other cities plagued with foreclosures.

But even in Naples, the recession stung. Commercial development in the town halted.

Naples canceled its annual Easter egg hunt and haunted house.

The city laid off maintenance workers and let job openings go unfilled, shaving 60 spots from the city payroll of about 500.

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24/7

Newborn killer whale a good sign for imperiled pod

SEATTLE (AP) -- A newborn orca in the endangered pod that frequents Puget Sound is an encouraging sign following the death earlier this month of a pregnant killer whale from the same group.

"That was a pretty hard hit," Howard Garrett of the Whidbey Island-based Orca Network said Wednesday. "It's good to see a positive sign."

The baby orca was discovered Tuesday by Center for Whale Research scientist Ken Balcomb and another scientist monitoring members of J-pod off the Canadian Gulf Islands of British Columbia.

The presumed mother is J-16, a 43-year-old that has had three surviving calves, Balcomb said. The baby killer whale was estimated to be a day or two old and appeared healthy. It has been designated J-50.

Brad Hanson, a wildlife biologist with NOAA Fisheries, said he had noticed that before dawn Tuesday, satellite tracking showed the whale pod to have ducked into a narrow, pro-



In this Tuesday, Dec. 30, 2014 photo provided by the Center for Whale Research, a new baby orca whale swims near its mother near Vancouver Island in the Canadian Gulf Islands of British Columbia. The newborn is being called J-50. With the new addition, there are now 78 of the endangered whales in the waters of British Columbia and Washington state.

Associated Press

tected passage between Shaw and Orcas islands in the San Juan archipelago - an area where he'd never seen them travel before.

"I was sort of scratching my head about why they'd go into that area," he said Wednesday. "The whales tend to use particular

channels, and it was a very unusual travel route. This is pure speculation, but they may have been seeking an area of sheltered water for the birth."

The birth makes 78 orcas in the southern resident killer whale population that spends time in the inland waters of Washington state and Canada. They are an endangered species in Canada and the U.S. Now, everyone is hoping J-50 survives.

An estimated 35 percent to 45 percent of orcas die in their first year, Garrett said. The Puget Sound population is in danger, with a limited supply of their favorite food, chinook salmon. Killer whales are 7 to 8 feet

in length at birth and weigh about 400 pounds. They are born after a 17-month gestation and nurse for at least

a year, Balcomb wrote on the Center for Whale Research website.

It takes until their early teens for females to mature and late teens for males to mature. It is good news that J16, the mother, is a proven producer of calves, though her next most recent calf (J48) was born and died in December 2011 in Puget Sound, Balcomb wrote.

It has been 2 1/2 years since the last successful birth in the population. If orca calves don't survive, the iconic whales face certain extinction, he said.

That's why the death of the pregnant 19-year-old killer whale J-32 in early December in British Columbia waters was so distressing.

The fetus had died, and a resulting bacterial infection killed the mother, Fisheries and Oceans Canada said.

Ready to shiver? Arctic air to put America on ice

SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Much of America is about to get the Arctic shivers.

Meteorologists are forecasting frigid polar air will plunge much of the central and eastern U.S. into sub-freezing temperatures next week.

National Weather Service meteorologist Paul Kocin, an expert on winter storms, said it is a classic pattern of

massive blasts of Arctic air hitting just about everyone east of the Rockies.

He said it will rival last year's January Arctic outbreak that introduced the phrase "polar vortex" to America. "This is going to be a big cold outbreak, pretty windy as well," Kocin said. "It's going to drive all the way down south."

Kocin predicts a small Midwestern band of intense

snow along with the cold, with some also in parts of the Northeast.

Even though it is several days in advance, meteorologists are pretty sure about this forecast. Kocin said many of the best computer models are saying the same thing.

This is all coming from cold air escaping from the Arctic. The center of the cold air will be around Quebec, Canada.

Donna Douglas, 'Beverly Hillbillies' star, is dead

FRAZIER MOORE
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Donna Douglas, who played the buxom tomboy Elly May Clampett on the hit 1960s sitcom "The Beverly Hillbillies," has died.

Her niece says Douglas died Thursday in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, near her hometown of Zachary. The cause of death was pancreatic cancer, Charlene Smith said. Douglas was 82. She was best known for her role in "The Beverly Hillbillies," the CBS comedy about a backwoods Ozark family who moved to Beverly Hills after striking it rich from oil discovered on their land.

The series, which ran from 1962 to 1971, also starred the late Buddy Ebsen and Irene Ryan as well as Max Baer Jr., who turns 77 on Sunday.

As Elly May, she seemed blissfully unaware of her status as a bumpkin blond bombshell. Typically she was clad in a snug flannel shirt and tight jeans cinched with a rope belt, and she seemed to prefer

her critters to any beau.

Chosen from more than 500 other actresses, Douglas said she felt at ease playing the role because, like her character, she grew up a poor Southern tomboy. Her childhood in Pride, Louisiana, came in handy when she was asked during her audition to milk a goat. "I had milked cows before," she recalled in a 2009 interview with The Associated Press. "I figured they were equipped the same, so I just went on over and did it."

The show was not only assailed by critics, but by the network president who put it on the air: "I HATED it," Michael Dann confided much later. "After screening the pilot, I don't think I ever watched another segment."

The public, however, felt quite the opposite: It ran for nine seasons, often in the Top 10. In their own way, the Clampetts were a forerunner of the '60s counter-culture.

It wasn't much of a stretch for Douglas to fit into the troupe, said her cousin,

Charlene Smith.

"She was always happy, and she really loved animals — just like her character on 'The Beverly Hillbillies.' She was a wonderful lady, a very good Christian lady."

Indeed, when Douglas gave her autograph, she included a biblical verse ("Trust in the Lord with all your heart..."), according to New Orleans TV station WAFB.

Douglas' career began with beauty pageants — she was Miss Baton Rouge and Miss New Orleans — followed by a trip to New York to pursue a career in entertainment.

"That was the first time I had ever been on an airplane," Douglas said.

While modeling didn't appeal to her — "I didn't want to be that skinny" —



In this March 4, 2009 file photo, Donna Douglas, who starred in the television series "The Beverly Hillbillies" tours the Audubon Zoo in New Orleans.

Associated Press

television did. Douglas was featured as the Letters Girl on "The Perry Como Show" in 1957 and as the Billboard Girl on "The Steve Allen Show" in 1959.

She landed a featured role

in the 1959 film "Career," starring Dean Martin and Shirley MacLaine, and a bit part in the film musical "Li'l Abner."

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Tess Gerritsen's 'Die Again' is rock solid

JEFF AYERS
Associated Press

Tess Gerritsen delivers another outstanding thriller in her continuing series featuring Boston police Detective Jane Rizzoli and medical examiner Dr. Maura Isles.

The murder of a big game hunter spurs the duo into action.

The victim was bound and hung upside down like a hunter stringing up his prey after a successful kill. His body was also cut open in a style reminiscent of being trimmed for meat consumption. The autopsy reveals the cause of death was likely a leopard attack, which has Isles questioning her skills as a medical examiner.

When another victim is discovered buried with several similarities to the first crime scene, Isles has

a difficult time convincing Rizzoli of the connection that she believes exists between the two cases. To uncover the truth, she must go behind her friend's back and hope she's proven right.

The murders appear to be tied to the events of a safari tour that went missing years earlier in Botswana. The guide wiped out the tourists, but one group member survived and now lives in almost total isolation. It now appears the killer is back and hunting for more victims, this time in Boston.

Fans familiar with Rizzoli and Isles through the TNT television show will find the surroundings a bit different, but the characters and intrigue still rock solid. Newcomers to Gerritsen and the franchise will discover a terrific mystery. □

Bono: I may never play guitar again after crash

LONDON (AP) — Bono says he now has a titanium elbow and may never play guitar again due to injuries suffered in a New York City cycling accident.

The 54-year-old U2 frontman suffered multiple injuries, including fractures to his left eye socket, shoulder blade and left elbow, when he crashed his bike in Central Park in November. He required hours of surgery after what doctors called a "high-energy bicycle accident."

On the band's website Thursday, Bono said the "recovery has been more difficult than I thought. As I write this, it is not clear that I will ever play guitar again." He added that his bandmates — The Edge, Adam Clayton and Larry Mullen — "have reminded me that neither they nor Western civilization are depending on this."

"I personally would very much miss fingering the frets of my green Irish falcon or my ... Gretsch," Bono wrote. "Just for the



In this July 20, 2011 file photo, Bono, right, and Adam Clayton, from the rock group U2, perform in concert as part of U2's 360 Tour at the New Meadowlands Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J.

Associated Press

pleasure, aside from writing tunes. But then does the Edge, or Jimmy Page, or any guitarist you know have a titanium elbow, as I do now?" The Edge is U2's principal guitarist.

Bono said he hadn't "been able to move around physically" since the accident, and would "have to concentrate hard" to be ready for a U2 tour due to start in May. □

Allen Leech finds a happy home at 'Downton Abbey'

LYNN ELBER

AP Television Writer

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)

— "Downton Abbey" star Allen Leech has a winning way with accents.

The Irish-born actor employs his native brogue in portraying Tom Branson, the former chauffeur who's become a landed-family insider on the PBS series that returns Sunday for its fifth season. But moviegoers hear a Scotch lilt from Leech's World War II code breaker in "The Imitation Game."

And, for an audience of one, Leech seals his adroitness with an impish take on the posh English tones of "Downton Abbey" creator and writer Julian Fellowes. When a nanny was discovered mistreating Tom's toddler daughter last season, Leech recalls, he asked Fellowes if Tom could punish the wayward servant.

"I don't think another death on our hands is what we need," Leech said, mimicking Fellowes — who, despite asking, has yet to hear the canny impression. "As soon as he fires me," Leech said, smiling.

There appears little danger of that. Leech's Tom has become an integral part of Lord Grantham's estate and the series. Tom may lack the elan of the late, lamented Matthew, but his solid warmth, coupled with Leech's helpful handsomeness, make him a worthy Downton leading man.

During a promotional visit here for "Downton Abbey," Leech was careful to avoid giving away details of the latest season — which, to the frustration of some viewers, comes to America after it airs in the U.K. — but he was willing to revisit past threads that are woven in for his character. Tom, a single father since the death several years before of his high-born wife, is increasingly uneasy in the embrace, however kind, of his wealthy in-laws. Fanning his discontent: an attractive woman who wants him to return to his onetime radicalism.

Teacher-firebrand Sarah Bunting, played by Daisy



In this July 22, 2014 file photo, Allen Leech of "Downton Abbey" poses for a portrait during press day at The Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, Calif. "Downton Abbey" returns Sunday, Jan. 4, 2015, for its fifth season on PBS, with guest stars including Richard E. Grant and Anna Chancellor.

Associated Press

Donna Douglas

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"She also had a small role as Tony Randall's secretary in the 1961 romantic comedy "Lover Come Back" with Rock Hudson and Doris Day. Douglas starred in one of the most memorable episodes of Rod Serling's "The Twilight Zone" — titled "Eye of the Beholder," it was the one in which her head is wrapped in bandages for most of the half-hour after plastic surgery aimed at fixing her "ugliness," which in fact was beauty in a universe of monsters. And she starred opposite Elvis Presley in the 1966 movie "Frankie and Johnny." After "The Beverly Hillbillies," Douglas worked in real estate, recorded

country and gospel music albums and wrote a book for children that drew on biblical themes. In 2010 she sued CBS and toymaker Mattel over a Barbie doll that used Elly May's name and likeness. The suit was settled in 2011. She said she never minded being typecast as her "Hillbillies" character. "So many kinds of people relate to Elly May," Douglas said. "So many people love her, and that means a lot to me." Douglas was married twice, to Roland John Bourgeois, Jr. until 1954, and then to The Beverly Hillbillies director Robert M. Leeds. They divorced in 1980 after nine years of marriage. Survivors include her son, Danny P. Bourgeois. □

Lewis, "certainly has reignited his passion for political life but also for change," Leech said. That has Tom seriously mulling a different life in America for him and his daughter.

"Bear in mind, the family aren't enamored of him going anywhere, which is a long way from season two," he said, laughing over Tom's rocky path in wooing Lady Sybil.

Leech's career has moved along nicely since he found, as a child appearing in school plays, that acting allowed him to exercise his imagination.

The real epiphany came at age 11, when he played the Cowardly Lion in a stage production of "The Wizard of Oz" and bumped into a schoolmate's father. The man mentioned that acting was his full-time job. Immersing himself in the magic of "Oz," he said,

"really invigorated me ... and then happening to meet someone who was a professional at this. It just completely changed my outlook on what I wanted to do."

(For movie buffs, he's unrelated to Cary Grant, whose birth name has the same pronunciation but a different spelling, Leach; "I've tried to claim him on different occasions," Leech joked.)

Among Leech's credits: the 2003 movie "Cowboys & Angels" and the TV series "Rome" and "The Tudors." He insists he's content to remain part of "Downton Abbey" until its run concludes, and sees Tom's "happy ending" coming within the boundaries of the grand estate.

"I believe he needs to find love, and he needs to find acceptance from that family for that person that he loves. Because I think Tom's place now is at the Abbey. I think it's his home." □



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